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Dedicated, by Permission, to
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES.

PROLEGOMENA

To WELL's Edition of

SHAKSPERE's WORKS,

CONTAINING

The Conclusion of Dr. JOHNSON's Preface.
Mr. STEEVENS's Advertisement prefixed to the Second Edition.
Dr. PERCY's Essay on the Origin of the English Stage.
The Globe on the Bancke Side, where SHAKSPERE acted.
The Licence for Acting; with the Names of the Original Actors.
Ancient and Modern Editions of SHAKSPERE's Plays and Poems.
Plays ascribed to SHAKSPERE.
Plays altered from SHAKSPERE.
Detached Pieces of Criticism on SHAKSPERE, his Editors, &c.
Extracts of Entries on the Books of the Stationers-Company.
Part of Mr. STEEVENS's Remarks on Ditto.

EMBELLISHMENTS.

Portrait of SHAKSPERE, copied from the Frontispiece to his
Poems, 1640. W. Marshall, Sc.
The House at Stratford upon Avon, in which SHAKSPERE was born.

London: Sold by the Proprietor, BRITISH-LIBRARY, Strand.
Price One Shilling and Sixpence.

To the PUBLIC.

THIS Work is intended to supercede the necessity for any other Edition whatever, as it will be calculated to gratify every class of Readers.

The Plan is to print each Play, *singly*, and *entire*, from the last revisions of Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, and GEORGE STEEVENS, Esq. &c. with *their Characters* of the Play, and *the Origin of the Fable*, as an introductory Preface to each Play.

The Plays to be printed by Mess. FRYS and COUCHMAN, on *two sorts of paper*; the best of which will be *superfine writing-post quality*, on a new *Bourgeois Letter*, cast and *delicately dressed* on purpose.

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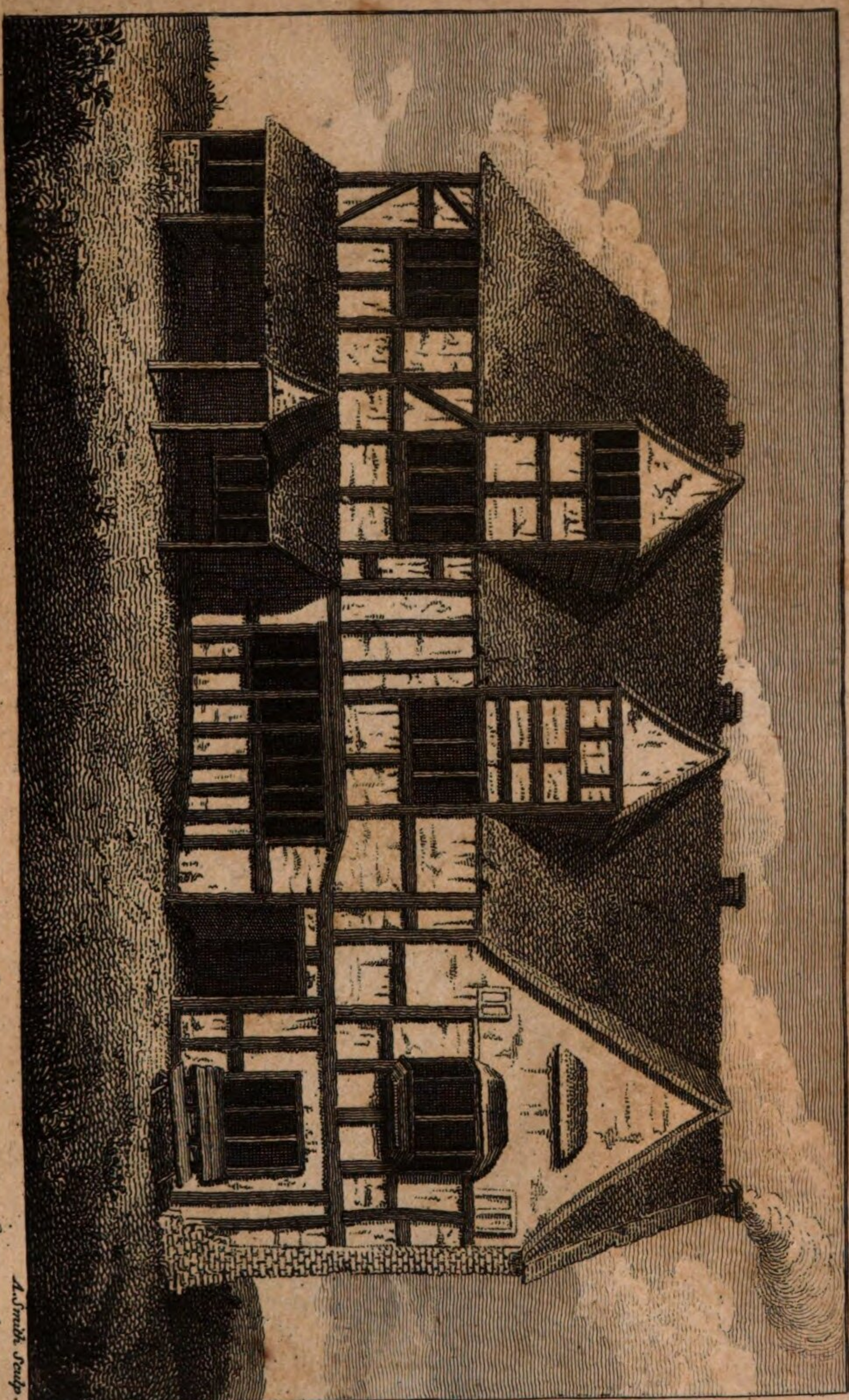


Delattre sculp.

London Printed for J. Bell, British Library Strand, Sept^r 26th 1786.

House of Stratford in which Shakespeare lived.

A. Smith. Sculp.



must increase his ideas, like other mortals, by gradual acquisition, he, like them, grew wiser as he grew older, could display life better, as he knew it more, and instruct with more efficacy, as he was himself more amply instructed.

There is a vigilance of observation, and accuracy of distinction, which books and precepts cannot confer; from this, almost all original and native excellence proceeds. Shakspeare must have looked upon mankind with perspicacity, in the highest degree curious and attentive. Other writers borrow their characters from preceding writers, and diversify them only by the accidental appendages of present manners; the dress is a little varied, but the body is the same. Our author had both matter and form to provide; for, except the characters of Chaucer, to whom I think he is not much indebted, there were no writers in English, and perhaps not many in other modern languages, which shewed life in its native colours.

The contest about the original benevolence or malignity of man, had not yet commenced. Speculation had not yet attempted to analyse the mind, to trace the passions to their sources, to unfold the seminal principles of vice and virtue, or sound the depths of the heart for the motives of action. All those inquiries, which from that time that human nature became the fashionable study, have been made sometimes with nice discernment, but often with idle subtilty, were yet unattempted. The tales, with which the

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infancy of learning was satisfied, exhibited only the superficial appearances of action, related the events, but omitted the causes, and were formed for such as delighted in wonders rather than in truth. Mankind was not then to be studied in the closet; he that would know the world, was under the necessity of gleaning his own remarks, by mingling, as he could, in its business and amusements.

Boyle congratulated himself upon his high birth, because it favoured his curiosity, by facilitating his access. Shakspeare had no such advantage; he came to London a needy adventurer, and lived for a time by very mean employments. Many works of genius and learning have been performed in states of life that appear very little favourable to thought, or to inquiry: so many, that he who considers them, is inclined to think that he sees enterprize and perseverance predominating over all external agency, and bidding help and hindrance vanish before them. The genius of Shakspeare was not to be depressed by the weight of poverty, nor limited by the narrow conversation to which men in want are inevitably condemned; the incumbrances of his fortune were shaken from his mind, *as dew-drops from a lion's mane.*

Though he had so many difficulties to encounter, and so little assistance to surmount them, he has been able to obtain an exact knowledge of many modes of life, and many casts of native dispositions; to vary them with great multiplicity; to mark them by nice distinctions; and to shew them in full view by proper combinations.

combinations. In this part of his performances he had none to imitate, but has been himself imitated by all succeeding writers; and it may be doubted whether, from all his successors, more maxims of theoretical knowledge, or more rules of practical prudence, can be collected, than he alone has given to his country.

Nor was his attention confined to the actions of men; he was an exact surveyor of the inanimate world; his descriptions have always some peculiarities, gathered by contemplating things as they really exist. It may be observed, that the oldest poets of many nations preserve their reputation, and that the following generations of wit, after a short celebrity, sink into oblivion. The first, whoever they be, must take their sentiments and descriptions immediately from knowledge; the resemblance is therefore just; their descriptions are verified by every eye, and their sentiments acknowledged by every breast. Those whom their fame invites to the same studies, copy partly them, and partly nature, till the books of one age gain such authority, as to stand in the place of nature to another; and imitation, always deviating a little, becomes at last capricious and casual. Shakspeare, whether life or nature be his subject, shews plainly, that he has seen with his own eyes; he gives the image which he receives, not weakened or distorted by the intervention of any other mind; the ignorant feel his representations to be just, and the learned see that they are complete.

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Perhaps

Perhaps it would not be easy to find any author, except Homer, who invented so much as Shakspeare, who so much advanced the studies which he cultivated, or effused so much novelty upon his age or country. The form, the characters, the language, and the shows of the English drama are his. *He seems, says Dennis, to have been the very original of our English tragical harmony, that is, the harmony of blank verse, diversified often by dissyllable and trissyllable terminations. For the diversity distinguishes it from heroic harmony, and by bringing it nearer to common use, makes it more proper to gain attention, and more fit for action and dialogue. Such verse we make when we are writing prose; we make such verse in common conversation.*

I know not whether this praise is rigorously just. The dissyllable termination, which the critick rightly appropriates to the drama, is to be found, though, I think, not in *Gorboduc*, which is confessedly before our author; yet in *Hieronymo**, of which the date is not certain, but which there is reason to believe at least as old as his earliest plays. This however is certain, that he is the first who taught either tragedy or comedy to please, there being no theatrical piece of any older writer, of which the name is known, except to antiquaries and collectors of books, which are sought because they are scarce, and would not have been scarce, had they been much esteemed.

* It appears, from the induction of Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew-Fair*, to have been acted before the year 1590.

To him we must ascribe the praise, unless Spenser may divide it with him, of having first discovered to how much smoothness and harmony the English language could be softened. He has speeches, perhaps sometimes scenes, which have all the delicacy of Rowe, without his effeminacy. He endeavours, indeed, commonly to strike by the force and vigour of his dialogue, but he never executes his purpose better, than when he tries to sooth by softness.

Yet it must be at last confessed, that as we owe every thing to him, he owes something to us; that, if much of his praise is paid by perception and judgment, much is likewise given by custom and veneration. We fix our eyes upon his graces, and turn them from his deformities, and endure in him what we should in another loath or despise. If we endured without praising, respect for the father of our drama might excuse us; but I have seen, in the book of some modern critick, a collection of anomalies, which shew that he has corrupted language by every mode of depravation, but which his admirer has accumulated as a monument of honour.

He has scenes of undoubted and perpetual excellence, but perhaps not one play, which, if it were now exhibited as the work of a contemporary writer, would be heard to the conclusion. I am indeed far from thinking, that his works were wrought to his own ideas of perfection; when they were such as would satisfy the audience, they satisfied the writer. It is seldom that authors, though more studious of

fame than Shakspeare, rise much above the standard of their own age ; to add a little to what is best, will always be sufficient for present praise, and those who find themselves exalted into fame, are willing to credit their encomiasts, and to spare the labour of contending with themselves.

It does not appear, that Shakspeare thought his works worthy of posterity, that he levied any ideal tribute upon future times, or had any further prospect, than of present popularity and present profit. When his plays had been acted, his hope was at an end ; he solicited no addition of honour from the reader. He therefore made no scruple to repeat the same jests in many dialogues, or to entangle different plots by the same knot of perplexity, which may be at least forgiven him, by those who recollect, that of Congreve's four comedies, two are concluded by a marriage in a mask, by a deception, which, perhaps, never happened, and which, whether likely or not, he did not invent.

So careless was this great poet of future fame, that, though he retired to ease and plenty, while he was yet little *declined into the vale of years*, before he could be disgusted with fatigue, or disabled by infirmity, he made no collection of his works, nor desired to rescue those that had been already published from the depravations that obscured them, or secure to the rest a better destiny, by giving them to the world in their genuine state.

Of

Of the plays which bear the name of Shakspeare in the late editions, the greater part were not published till about seven years after his death ; and the few which appeared in his life, are apparently thrust into the world without the care of the author, and therefore probably without his knowledge.

Of all the publishers, clandestine or professed, the negligence and unskilfulness has by the late revisers been sufficiently shewn. The faults of all are indeed numerous and gross, and have not only corrupted many passages, perhaps beyond recovery, but have brought others into suspicion, which are only obscured by obsolete phraseology, or by the writer's unskilfulness and affectation. To alter is more easy than to explain, and temerity is a more common quality than diligence. Those who saw that they must employ conjecture to a certain degree, were willing to indulge it a little further. Had the author published his own works, we should have sat quietly down to disentangle his intricacies, and clear his obscurities ; but now we tear what we cannot loose, and eject what we happen not to understand.

The faults are more than could have happened without the concurrence of many causes. The style of Shakspeare was in itself ungrammatical, perplexed, and obscure ; his works were transcribed for the players by those who may be supposed to have seldom understood them ; they were transmitted by copiers equally unskilful, who still multiplied errors ; they were perhaps sometimes mutilated by the actors,
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for the sake of shortening the speeches; and were at last printed without correction of the press.

In this state they remained, not as Dr. Warburton supposes, because they were unregarded, but because the editor's art was not yet applied to modern languages, and our ancestors were accustomed to so much negligence of English printers, that they could very patiently endure it. At last an edition was undertaken by Rowe; not because a poet was to be published by a poet, for Rowe seems to have thought very little on correction or explanation; but that our author's works might appear like those of his fraternity, with the appendages of a life and recommendatory preface. Rowe has been clamorously blamed for not performing what he did not undertake; and it is time that justice be done him, by confessing, that though he seems to have had no thought of corruption beyond the printer's errors, yet he has made many emendations, if they were not made before, which his successors have received without acknowledgment, and which, if they had produced them, would have filled pages and pages with censures of the stupidity by which the faults were committed, with displays of the absurdities which they involved, with ostentatious expositions of the new reading, and self-congratulations on the happiness of discovering.

As of the other editors I have preserved the prefaces, I have likewise borrowed the author's life from Rowe, though not written with much elegance or spirit; it relates, however, what is now to be known,
and

and therefore deserves to pass through all succeeding publications.

The nation had been for many years content enough with Mr. Rowe's performance, when Mr. Pope made them acquainted with the true state of Shakspeare's text, shewed that it was extremely corrupt, and gave reason to hope that there were means of reforming it. He collated the old copies, which none had thought to examine before, and restored many lines to their integrity; but, by a very compendious criticism, he rejected whatever he disliked, and thought more of amputation than of cure.

I know not why he is commended by Dr. Warburton for distinguishing the genuine from the spurious plays. In this choice he exerted no judgment of his own; the plays which he received, were given by Heminge and Condell, the first editors; and those which he rejected, though, according to the licentiousness of the press in those times, they were printed during Shakspeare's life, with his name, had been omitted by his friends, and were never added to his works before the edition of 1664, from which they were copied by the later printers.

This is a work which Pope seems to have thought unworthy of his abilities, being not able to suppress his contempt of *the dull duty of an editor*. He understood but half his undertaking. The duty of a collator is indeed dull; yet, like other tedious tasks, is very necessary; but an emendatory critick would ill discharge his duty, without qualities very different from

from dulness. In perusing a corrupted piece, he must have before him all possibilities of meaning, with all possibilities of expression. Such must be his comprehension of thought, and such his copiousness of language. Out of many readings possible, he must be able to select that which best suits with the state, opinions, and modes of language prevailing in every age, and with his author's particular cast of thought, and turn of expression. Such must be his knowledge, and such his taste. Conjectural criticism demands more than humanity possesses, and he that exercises it with most praise, has very frequent need of indulgence. Let us now be told no more of the dull duty of an editor.

Confidence is the common consequence of success. They whose excellence of any kind has been loudly celebrated, are ready to conclude, that their powers are universal. Pope's edition fell below his own expectations, and he was so much offended, when he was found to have left any thing for others to do, that he passed the latter part of his life in a state of hostility with verbal criticism.

I have retained all his notes, that no fragment of so great a writer may be lost; his preface, valuable alike for elegance of composition and justness of remark, and containing a general criticism on his author, so extensive that little can be added, and so exact that little can be disputed, every editor has an interest to suppress, but that every reader would demand its insertion.

Pope

Pope was succeeded by Theobald, a man of narrow comprehension, and small acquisitions, with no native and intrinsick splendour of genius, with little of the artificial light of learning, but zealous for minute accuracy, and not negligent in pursuing it. He collated the ancient copies, and rectified many errors. A man so anxiously scrupulous might have been expected to do more, but what little he did was commonly right.

In his reports of copies and editions, he is not to be trusted without examination. He speaks sometimes indefinitely of copies, when he has only one. In his enumeration of editions, he mentions the two first folios as of high, and the third folio as of middle authority; but the truth is, that the first is equivalent to all others, and that the rest only deviate from it by the printer's negligence. Whoever has any of the folios has all, excepting those diversities which mere reiteration of editions will produce. I collated them all at the beginning, but afterwards used only the first.

Of his notes I have generally retained those which he retained himself in his second edition, except when they were confuted by subsequent annotators, or were too minute to merit preservation. I have sometimes adopted his restoration of a comma, without inserting the panegyrick in which he celebrated himself for his achievement. The exuberant excrescence of his diction I have often lopped, his triumphant exultations over Pope and Rowe I have sometimes suppressed,

pressed, and his contemptible ostentation I have frequently concealed; but I have in some places shewn him, as he would have shewn himself, for the reader's diversion, that the inflated emptiness of some notes may justify or excuse the contraction of the rest.

Theobald, thus weak and ignorant, thus mean and faithless, thus petulant and ostentatious, by the good luck of having Pope for his enemy, has escaped, and escaped alone, with reputation, from this undertaking. So willingly does the world support those who solicit favour, against those who command reverence; and so easily is he praised, whom no man can envy.

Our author fell then into the hands of Sir Thomas Hanmer, the Oxford editor, a man, in my opinion, eminently qualified by nature for such studies. He had what is the first requisite to emendatory criticism, that intuition by which the poet's intention is immediately discovered, and that dexterity of intellect which dispatches its work by the easiest means. He had undoubtedly read much; his acquaintance with customs, opinions, and traditions, seems to have been large; and he is often learned without shew. He seldom passes what he does not understand, without an attempt to find or to make a meaning, and sometimes hastily makes what a little more attention would have found. He is solicitous to reduce to grammar what he could not be sure that his author intended to be grammatical. Shakspeare regarded more the
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series of ideas, than of words; and his language, not being designed for the reader's desk, was all that he desired it to be, if it conveyed his meaning to the audience.

Hanmer's care of the metre has been too violently censured. He found the measure reformed in so many passages, by the silent labours of some editors, with the silent acquiescence of the rest, that he thought himself allowed to extend a little further the licence, which had already been carried so far without reprehension; and of his corrections in general, it must be confessed, that they are often just, and made commonly with the least possible violation of the text.

But, by inserting his emendations, whether invented or borrowed, into the page, without any notice of varying copies, he has appropriated the labour of his predecessors, and made his own edition of little authority. His confidence indeed, both in himself and others, was too great; he supposes all to be right that was done by Pope and Theobald; he seems not to suspect a critick of fallibility; and it was but reasonable that he should claim what he so liberally granted.

As he never writes without careful inquiry and diligent consideration, I have received all his notes, and believe that every reader will wish for more.

Of the last editor it is more difficult to speak. Respect is due to high place, tenderness to living reputation, and veneration to genius and learning; but

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he cannot be justly offended at that liberty of which he has himself so frequently given an example, nor very solicitous what is thought of notes, which he ought never to have considered as part of his serious employments, and which, I suppose, since the ardour of composition is remitted, he no longer numbers among his happy effusions.

The original and predominant error of his commentary, is acquiescence in his first thoughts; that precipitation which is produced by consciousness of quick discernment; and that confidence which presumes to do, by surveying the surface, what labour only can perform, by penetrating the bottom. His notes exhibit sometimes perverse interpretations, and sometimes improbable conjectures; he at one time gives the author more profundity of meaning than the sentence admits, and at another discovers absurdities, where the sense is plain to every other reader. But his emendations are likewise often happy and just; and his interpretation of obscure passages learned and sagacious.

Of his notes, I have commonly rejected those, against which the general voice of the publick has exclaimed, or which their own incongruity immediately condemns, and which, I suppose, the author himself would desire to be forgotten. Of the rest, to part I have given the highest approbation, by inserting the offered reading in the text; part I have left to the judgment of the reader, as doubtful, though specious; and part I have censured without reserve; but

but I am sure without bitterness of malice, and, I hope, without wantonness of insult.

It is no pleasure to me, in revising my volumes, to observe how much paper is wasted in confutation. Whoever considers the revolutions of learning, and the various questions of greater or less importance, upon which wit and reason have exercised their powers, must lament the unsuccessfulness of inquiry, and the slow advances of truth, when he reflects, that great part of the labour of every writer is only the destruction of those that went before him. The first care of the builder of a new system, is to demolish the fabricks which are standing. The chief desire of him that comments upon an author, is to shew how much other commentators have corrupted and obscured him. The opinions prevalent in one age, as truths above the reach of controversy, are confuted and rejected in another, and rise again to reception in remoter times. Thus the human mind is kept in motion without progress. Thus sometimes truth and error, and sometimes contrarieties of error, take each other's place by reciprocal invasion. The tide of seeming knowledge, which is poured over one generation, retires and leaves another naked and barren; the sudden meteors of intelligence, which for a while appear to shoot their beams into the regions of obscurity, on a sudden withdraw their lustre, and leave mortals again to groping their way.

These elevations and depressions of renown, and the contradictions to which all improvers of know-

ledge must for ever be exposed, since they are not escaped by the highest and brightest of mankind, may surely be endured with patience by criticks and annotators, who can rank themselves but as the satellites of their authors. How canst thou beg for life, says Homer's hero to his captive, when thou knowest that thou art now to suffer only what must, another day, be suffered by Achilles?

Dr. Warburton had a name sufficient to confer celebrity on those who could exalt themselves into antagonists, and his notes have raised a clamour too loud to be distinct. His chief assailants are the authors of *The canons of criticism*, and of *The revision of Shakspeare's text*; of which one ridicules his errors with airy petulance, suitable enough to the levity of the controversy; the other attacks them with gloomy malignity, as if he were dragging to justice an assassin or incendiary. The one stings like a fly, sucks a little blood, takes a gay flutter, and returns for more; the other bites like a viper, and would be glad to leave inflammations and gangrene behind him. When I think on one, with his confederates, I remember the danger of *Coriolanus*, who was afraid that *girls with spits, and boys with stones, should slay him in puny battle*; when the other crosses my imagination, I remember the prodigy in *Macbeth*:

*A falcon tow'ring in his pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.*

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Let me however do them justice. One is a wit, and one a scholar*. They have both shewn acuteness sufficient in the discovery of faults, and have both advanced some probable interpretations of obscure passages; but when they aspire to conjecture and emendation, it appears how falsely we all estimate our own abilities, and the little which they have been able to perform might have taught them more candour to the endeavours of others.

Before Dr. Warburton's edition, *Critical Observations on Shakspeare* had been published by Mr. Upton†, a man skilled in languages, and acquainted with books, but who seems to have had no great vigour of genius, or nicety of taste. Many of his explanations are curious and useful, but he likewise, though he professed to oppose the licentious confidence of editors, and adhere to the old copies, is unable to restrain the rage of emendation, though his ardour is ill seconded by his skill. Every cold empirick, when his heart is expanded by a successful experiment, swells into a

* It is extraordinary that this gentleman should attempt so voluminous a work, as *The Revisal of Shakspeare's text*, when he tells us in his preface, "he was not so fortunate as
" to be furnished with either of the folio editions, much
" less any of the ancient quartos: and even Sir Thomas
" Hanmer's performance was known to him only by Dr.
" Warburton's representation." FARMER.

† Republished by him in 1748, after Dr. Warburton's edition, with alterations, &c. STEEVENS.

theorist, and the laborious collator at some unlucky moment frolicks in conjecture.

Critical, historical, and explanatory notes have been likewise published upon Shakspeare by Dr. Grey, whose diligent perusal of the old English writers has enabled him to make some useful observations. What he undertook he has well enough performed ; but as he neither attempts judicial nor emendatory criticism, he employs rather his memory than his sagacity. It were to be wished that all would endeavour to imitate his modesty, who have not been able to surpass his knowledge.

I can say, with great sincerity, of all my predecessors, what I hope will hereafter be said of me, that not one has left Shakspeare without improvement ; nor is there one to whom I have not been indebted for assistance and information. Whatever I have taken from them, it was my intention to refer to its original author, and it is certain, that what I have not given to another, I believed, when I wrote it, to be my own. In some perhaps I have been anticipated ; but if I am ever found to encroach upon the remarks of any other commentator, I am willing that the honour, be it more or less, should be transferred to the first claimant, for his right, and his alone, stands above dispute ; the second can prove his pretensions only to himself, nor can himself always distinguish invention, with sufficient certainty, from recollection.

They have all been treated by me with candour, which they have not been careful of observing to one
another.

another. It is not easy to discover from what cause the acrimony of a scholiast can naturally proceed. The subjects to be discussed by him are of very small importance; they involve neither property nor liberty; nor favour the interest of sect or party. The various readings of copies, and different interpretations of a passage, seem to be questions that might exercise the wit, without engaging the passions. But whether it be, that *small things make mean men proud*, and vanity catches small occasions; or that all contrariety of opinion, even in those that can defend it no longer, makes proud men angry; there is often found in commentators a spontaneous strain of invective and contempt, more eager and venomous than is vented by the most furious controvertist in politicks against those whom he is hired to defame.

Perhaps the lightness of the matter may conduce to the vehemence of the agency; when the truth to be investigated is so near to inexistence, as to escape attention, its bulk is to be enlarged by rage and exclamation: that to which all would be indifferent in its original state, may attract notice when the fate of a name is appended to it. A commentator has indeed great temptations to supply by turbulence what he wants of dignity, to beat his little gold to a spacious surface, to work that to foam which no art or diligence can exalt to spirit.

The notes which I have borrowed or written are either illustrative, by which difficulties are explained; or judicial, by which faults and beauties are remarked:

marked : or emendatory, by which depravations are corrected.

The explanations transcribed from others, if I do not subjoin any other interpretation, I suppose commonly to be right, at least I intend by acquiescence to confess, that I have nothing better to propose.

After the labours of all the editors, I found many passages which appeared to me likely to obstruct the greater number of readers, and thought it my duty to facilitate their passage. It is impossible for an expositor not to write too little for some, and too much for others. He can only judge what is necessary by his own experience ; and how long soever he may deliberate, will at last explain many lines which the learned will think impossible to be mistaken, and omit many for which the ignorant will want his help. These are censures merely relative, and must be quietly endured. I have endeavoured to be neither superfluously copious, nor scrupulously reserved, and hope that I have made my author's meaning accessible to many, who before were frightened from perusing him, and contributed something to the publick, by diffusing innocent and rational pleasure.

The complete explanation of an author not systematick and consequential, but desultory and vagrant, abounding in casual allusions and light hints, is not to be expected from any single scholiast. All personal reflections, when names are suppressed, must be in a few years irrecoverably obliterated ; and customs, too minute to attract the notice of law, such as modes of dress,

dress, formalities of conversation, rules of visits, disposition of furniture, and practices of ceremony, which naturally find places in familiar dialogue, are so fugitive and unsubstantial, that they are not easily retained or recovered. What can be known will be collected by chance, from the recesses of obscure and obsolete papers, perused commonly with some other view. Of this knowledge every man has some, and none as much; but when an author has engaged the publick attention, those who can add any thing to his illustration, communicate their discoveries, and time produces what had eluded diligence.

To time I have been obliged to resign many passages, which, though I did not understand them, will perhaps hereafter be explained, having, I hope, illustrated some, which others have neglected or mistaken, sometimes by short remarks, or marginal directions, such as every editor has added at his will, and often by comments more laborious than the matter will seem to deserve; but that which is most difficult is not always most important, and to an editor nothing is a trifle by which his author is obscured.

The poetical beauties or defects I have not been very diligent to observe. Some plays have more, and some fewer judicial observations, not in proportion to their difference of merit, but because I gave this part of my design to chance and to caprice. The reader, I believe, is seldom pleased to find his opinion anticipated; it is natural to delight more in what we find
or

or make, than in what we receive. Judgment, like other faculties, is improved by practice, and its advancement is hindered by submission to dictatorial decisions, as the memory grows torpid by the use of a table-book. Some initiation is however necessary; of all skill, part is infused by precept, and part is obtained by habit; I have therefore shewn so much as may enable the candidate of criticism to discover the rest.

To the end of the plays I have added short strictures, containing a general censure of faults, or praise of excellence; in which I know not how much I have concurred with the current opinion; but I have not, by any affectation of singularity, deviated from it. Nothing is minutely and particularly examined, and therefore it is to be supposed, that in the plays which are condemned there is much to be praised, and in these which are praised much to be condemned.

The part of criticism in which the whole succession of editors has laboured with the greatest diligence, which has occasioned the most arrogant ostentation, and excited the keenest acrimony, is the emendation of corrupted passages, to which the publick attention, having been first drawn by the violence of the contention between Pope and Theobald, has been continued by the persecution, which, with a kind of conspiracy, has been since raised against all the publishers of Shakspeare.

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That many passages have passed in a state of depravation through all the editions is indubitably certain; of these the restoration is only to be attempted by collation of copies, or sagacity of conjecture. The collator's province is safe and easy, the conjecturer's perilous and difficult. Yet as the greater part of the plays are extant only in one copy, the peril must not be avoided, nor the difficulty refused.

Of the readings which this emulation of amendment has hitherto produced, some from the labours of every publisher I have advanced into the text; those are to be considered as in my opinion sufficiently supported; some I have rejected without mention, as evidently erroneous; some I have left in the notes without censure or approbation, as resting in equipoise between objection and defence; and some which seemed specious, but not right, I have inserted with a subsequent animadversion.

Having classed the observations of others, I was at last to try what I could substitute for their mistakes, and how I could supply their omissions. I collated such copies as I could procure, and wished for more, but have not found the collectors of these rarities very communicative. Of the editions which chance or kindness put into my hands I have given an enumeration, that I may not be blamed for neglecting what I had not the power to do.

By examining the old copies, I soon found that the later publishers, with all their boasts of diligence, suffered many passages to stand unauthorized, and
contented

contented themselves with Rowe's regulation of the text, even where they knew it to be arbitrary, and with a little consideration might have found it to be wrong. Some of these alterations are only the ejection of a word for one that appeared to him more elegant or more intelligible. These corruptions I have often silently rectified; for the history of our language, and the true force of our words, can only be preserved, by keeping the text of authors free from adulteration. Others, and those very frequent, smoothed the cadence, or regulated the measure; on these I have not exercised the same rigour; if only a word was transposed, or a particle inserted or omitted, I have sometimes suffered the line to stand; for the inconstancy of the copies is such, as that some liberties may be easily permitted. But this practice I have not suffered to proceed far, having restored the primitive diction wherever it could for any reason be preferred.

The emendations, which comparison of copies supplied, I have inserted in the text; sometimes, where the improvement was slight, without notice, and sometimes with an account of the reasons of the change.

Conjecture, though it be sometimes unavoidable, I have not wantonly nor licentiously indulged. It has been my settled principle, that the reading of the ancient books is probably true, and therefore is not to be disturbed for the sake of elegance, perspicuity, or mere improvement of the sense. For
though

though much credit is not due to the fidelity, nor any to the judgment of the first publishers, yet they who had the copy before their eyes were more likely to read it right, than we who read it only by imagination. But it is evident that they have often made strange mistakes by ignorance or negligence, and that therefore something may be properly attempted by criticism, keeping the middle way between presumption and timidity.

Such criticism I have attempted to practise, and, where any passage appeared inextricably perplexed, have endeavoured to discover how it may be recalled to sense, with least violence. But my first labour is, always to turn the old text on every side, and try if there be any interstice through which light can find its way; nor would Huetius himself condemn me, as refusing the trouble of research, for the ambition of alteration. In this modest industry I have not been unsuccessful. I have rescued many lines from the violations of temerity, and secured many scenes from the inroads of correction. I have adopted the Roman sentiment, that it is more honourable to save a citizen, than to kill an enemy, and have been more careful to protect than to attack.

I have preserved the common distribution of the plays into acts, though I believe it to be in almost all the plays void of authority. Some of those which are divided in the later editions have no division in the first folio, and some that are divided in the folio have no division in the preceding copies. The settled

mode of the theatre requires four intervals in the play; but few, if any, of our author's compositions can be properly distributed in that manner. An act is so much of the drama as passes without intervention of time, or change of place. A pause makes a new act. In every real, and therefore in every imitative action, the intervals may be more or fewer, the restriction of five acts being accidental and arbitrary. This Shakspeare knew, and this he practised; his plays were written, and at first printed in one unbroken continuity, and ought now to be exhibited with short pauses, interposed as often as the scene is changed, or any considerable time is required to pass. This method would at once quell a thousand absurdities.

In restoring the author's works to their integrity, I have considered the punctuation as wholly in my power; for what could be their care of colons and commas, who corrupted words and sentences? Whatever could be done by adjusting points, is therefore silently performed, in some plays, with much diligence, in others with less; it is hard to keep a busy eye steadily fixed upon evanescent atoms, or a discursive mind upon evanescent truth.

The same liberty has been taken with a few particles, or other words of slight effect. I have sometimes inserted or omitted them without notice. I have done that sometimes, which the other editors have done always, and which indeed the state of the text may sufficiently justify.

The

The greater part of readers, instead of blaming us for passing trifles, will wonder that on mere trifles so much labour is expended, with such importance of debate, and such solemnity of diction. To these I answer with confidence, that they are judging of an art which they do not understand; yet cannot much reproach them with their ignorance, nor promise that they would become in general, by learning criticism, more useful, happier, or wiser.

As I practised conjecture more, I learned to trust it less; and after I printed a few plays, resolved to insert none of my own readings in the text. Upon this caution I now congratulate myself, for every day increases my doubt of my emendations.

Since I have confined my imagination to the margin, it must not be considered as very reprehensible, if I have suffered it to play some freaks in its own dominion. There is no danger in conjecture, if it be proposed as conjecture; and while the text remains uninjured, those changes may be safely offered, which are not considered even by him that offers them as necessary or safe.

If my readings are of little value, they have not been ostentatiously displayed, or importunately obtruded. I could have written longer notes, for the art of writing notes is not of difficult attainment. The work is performed, first by railing at the stupidity, negligence, ignorance, and asinine tastelessness of the former editors, and shewing, from all that goes before, and all that follows, the inelegance and absurdity of

the old reading ; then by proposing something, which to superficial readers would seem specious, but which the editor rejects with indignation ; then by producing the true reading, with a long paraphrase, and concluding with loud acclamations on the discovery, and a sober wish for the advancement and prosperity of genuine criticism.

All this may be done, and perhaps done sometimes without impropriety. But I have always suspected that the reading is right, which requires many words to prove it wrong ; and the emendation wrong, that cannot without so much labour appear to be right. The justness of a happy restoration strikes at once, and the moral precept may be well applied to criticism, *quod dubitas ne feceris*.

To dread the shore which he sees spread with wrecks, is natural to the sailor. I had before my eye so many critical adventures ended in miscarriage, that caution was forced upon me. I encountered in every page wit struggling with its own sophistry, and learning confused by the multiplicity of its views. I was forced to censure those whom I admired, and could not but reflect, while I was dispossessing their emendations, how soon the same fate might happen to my own, and how many of the readings which I have corrected may be by some other editor defended and established.

*Criticks I saw, that other's names efface,
And fix their own, with labour, in the place ;*

Their

*Their own, like others, soon their place resign'd,
Or disappear'd, and left the first behind.* POPE.

That a conjectural critick should often be mistaken, cannot be wonderful, either to others or himself, if it be considered, that in his art there is no system, no principal and axiomatical truth that regulates subordinate positions. His chance of error is renewed at every attempt; an oblique view of the passage, a slight misapprehension of a phrase, a casual inattention to the parts connected, is sufficient to make him not only fail, but fail ridiculously; and when he succeeds best, he produces perhaps but one reading of many probable, and he that suggests another will always be able to dispute his claims.

It is an unhappy state, in which danger is hid under pleasure. The allurements of emendation are scarcely resistible. Conjecture has all the joy and all the pride of invention, and he that has once started a happy change, is too much delighted to consider what objections may rise against it.

Yet conjectural criticism has been of great use in the learned world; nor is it my intention to depreciate a study, that has exercised so many mighty minds, from the revival of learning to our own age, from the bishop of Aleria to English Bentley. The criticks on ancient authors have, in the exercise of their sagacity, many assistances, which the editor of Shakspeare is condemned to want. They are employed upon grammatical and settled languages,

whose construction contributes so much to perspicuity, that Homer has fewer passages unintelligible than Chaucer. The words have not only a known regimen, but invariable quantities, which direct and confine the choice. There are commonly more manuscripts than one; and they do not often conspire in the same mistakes. Yet Scaliger could confess to Salmasius how little satisfaction his emendations gave him, *Illudunt nobis conjecturæ nostræ, quarum nos pudet, posteaquam in meliores codices incidimus.* And Lipsius could complain, that criticks were making faults, by trying to remove them, *Ut olim vitiis, ita nunc remediis laboratur.* And, indeed, where mere conjecture is to be used, the emendations of Scaliger and Lipsius, notwithstanding their wonderful sagacity and erudition, are often vague and disputable, like mine or Theobald's.

Perhaps I may not be more censured for doing wrong, than for doing little; for raising in the publick expectations, which at last I have not answered. The expectation of ignorance is indefinite, and that of knowledge is often tyrannical. It is hard to satisfy those who know not what to demand, or those who demand by design what they think impossible to be done. I have indeed disappointed no opinion more than my own; yet I have endeavoured to perform my task with no slight solicitude. Not a single passage in the whole work has appeared to me corrupt, which I have not attempted to restore; or obscure, which I have not endeavoured to illustrate. In

many I have failed, like others; and from many, after all my efforts, I have retreated, and confessed the repulse. I have not passed over, with affected superiority, what is equally difficult to the reader and to myself, but, where I could not instruct him, have owned my ignorance. I might easily have accumulated a mass of seeming learning upon easy scenes; but it ought not to be imputed to negligence, that where nothing was necessary, nothing has been done; or that, where others have said enough, I have said no more.

Notes are often necessary, but they are necessary evils. Let him, that is yet unacquainted with the powers of Shakspeare, and who desires to feel the highest pleasure that the drama can give, read every play, from the first scene to the last, with utter negligence of all his commentators. When his fancy is once on the wing, let it not stoop at correction or explanation. When his attention is strongly engaged, let it disdain alike to turn aside to the name of Theobald and of Pope. Let him read on through brightness and obscurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preserve his comprehension of the dialogue, and his interest in the fable; and, when the pleasures of novelty have ceased, let him attempt exactness, and read the commentators.

Particular passages are cleared by notes, but the general effect of the work is weakened. The mind is refrigerated by interruption; the thoughts are diverted from the principal subject; the reader is weary, he suspects

suspects not why ; and at last throws away the book which he has too diligently studied.

Parts are not to be examined till the whole has been surveyed ; there is a kind of intellectual remoteness necessary for the comprehension of any great work in its full design and in its true proportions ; a close approach shews the smaller niceties ; but the beauty of the whole is discerned no longer.

It is not very grateful to consider how little the succession of editors has added to this author's power of pleasing. He was read, admired, studied, and imitated, while he was yet deformed with all the improprieties which ignorance and neglect could accumulate upon him : while the reading was yet not rectified, nor his allusions understood ; yet then did Dryden pronounce, “ that Shakspeare was the man, “ who, of all modern and perhaps ancient poets, “ had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All “ the images of nature were still present to him, and “ he drew them not laboriously, but luckily : when “ he describes any thing, you more than see it, you “ feel it too. Those, who accuse him to have wanted “ learning, give him the greater commendation : he “ was naturally learned : he needed not the spectacles “ of books to read nature ; he looked inwards, and “ found her there. I cannot say he is every where “ alike ; were he so, I should do him injury to “ compare him with the greatest of mankind. He is “ many times flat and insipid ; his comick wit degenerating into clenches, his serious swelling into “ bombast.

“ bombast. But he is always great, when some great
“ occasion is presented to him : no man can say, he
“ ever had a fit subject for his wit, and did not then
“ raise himself as high above the rest of poets,

“ *Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi.*”

It is to be lamented, that such a writer should want a commentary ; that his language should become obsolete, or his sentiments obscure. But it is vain to carry wishes beyond the condition of human things ; that which must happen to all, has happened to Shakspeare, by accident and time ; and more than has been suffered by any other writer since the use of types, has been suffered by him through his own negligence of fame, or perhaps by that superiority of mind, which despised its own performances, when it compared them with its powers, and judged those works unworthy to be preserved, which the criticks of following ages were to contend for the fame of restoring and explaining.

Among these candidates of inferior fame, I am now to stand the judgment of the publick ; and wish that I could confidently produce my commentary as equal to the encouragement which I have had the honour of receiving. Every work of this kind is by its nature deficient, and I should feel little solicitude about the sentence, were it to be pronounced only by the skilful and the learned.

Of

Of what has been performed in this revision, an account is given in the following pages by Mr. Steevens, who might have spoken both of his own diligence and sagacity, in terms of greater self-approbation, without deviating from modesty or truth.

JOHNSON.

It is to be lamented, that such a writer should want a commentary; that his language should be come obscure, or his sentiments obscure. But it is vain to carry wishes beyond the condition of things: that which was happen to all, has happened to Shakespeare, by accident and time; and more than has been suffered by any other writer since the use of types, has been suffered by him through the own negligence of time, or perhaps by that negligence of mind, which beset his own performances, when he compared them with his powers, and judged these works unworthy to be preserved, which the critics of following ages were to contend for the sake of restoring and explaining.

Among these considerations of inferior fame, I am now to sound the judgment of the public; and wish that I could sufficiently produce my commentary as equal to the encouragement which I have had the honour of receiving. Every work of this kind is by its nature deficient, and I should feel little solicitude about the review, were it to be pronounced only by the skill of and the laudation.

MR.

MR. STEEVENS'S
ADVERTISEMENT

PREFIXED TO
THE SECOND EDITION.

THE want of adherence to the old copies, which has been complained of, in the text of every modern republication of Shakspeare, is fairly deducible from Mr. Rowe's inattention to one of the first duties of an editor*. Mr. Rowe did not print from the earliest

* "I must not (says Mr. Rowe in his dedication to the duke of Somerset) pretend to have restored this work to the exactness of the author's original manuscripts; those are lost, or, at least, are gone beyond any inquiry I could make; so that there was nothing left, but to *compare the several editions*, and give the true reading, as well as I could, from thence. This I have endeavoured to do pretty carefully, and rendered very many places intelligible, that were not so before. In some of the editions, especially the last, there were many lines (and in Hamlet one whole scene) left out together; these are now all supplied. I fear your grace will find some faults, but, I hope, they are mostly literal, and the errors of the press." Would not any one, from this declaration, suppose that Mr. Rowe (who does not appear to have consulted a single quarto) had at least *compared* the folios with each other?

and

and most correct, but from the most remote and inaccurate of the four folios. Between the years 1623 and 1685 (the dates of the first and last) the errors in every play, at least, were trebled. Several pages in each of these ancient editions have been examined, that the assertion might come more fully supported. It may be added, that as every fresh editor continued to make the text of his predecessor the ground-work of his own (never collating but where difficulties occurred) some deviations from the originals had been handed down, the number of which are lessened in the impression before us, as it has been constantly compared with the most authentick copies, whether collation was absolutely necessary for the recovery of sense, or not. The person who undertook this task, may have failed by inadvertency, as well as those who preceded him; but the reader may be assured, that he, who thought it his duty to free an author from such modern and unnecessary innovations, as had been censured in others, has not ventured to introduce any of his own.

It is not pretended, that a complete body of various readings is here collected; or that all the diversities which the copies exhibit, are pointed out; as near two-thirds of them are typographical mistakes, or such a change of insignificant particles, as would crowd the bottom of the page with an ostentation of materials, from which, at last, nothing useful could be selected.

The

The dialogue might, indeed, sometimes be lengthened by other insertions than have hitherto been made, but without advantage either to its spirit or beauty; as in the following instance :

Lear. No.

Kent. Yes.

Lear. No, I say.

Kent. I say, yea.

Here the quartos add :

Lear. No, no, *they would not.*

Kent. Yes, *they have.*

By the admission of this negation and affirmation, has any new idea been gained ?

The labours of preceding editors have not left room for a boast, that many valuable readings have been retrieved; though it may be fairly asserted, that the text of Shakspeare is restored to the condition in which the author, or rather his first publishers, appear to have left it, such emendations as were absolutely necessary, alone admitted : for where a particle, indispensably necessary to the sense, was wanting, such a supply has been silently adopted from other editions ; but where a syllable, or more, had been added for the sake of the metre only, which, at first, might have been irregular, such interpolations are here constantly retrenched, sometimes with, and sometimes without

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notice.

notice. Those speeches, which in the older editions are printed as prose, and from their own construction are incapable of being compressed into verse, without the aid of supplemental syllables, are restored to prose again; and the measure is divided afresh in others, where the mass of words had been inharmoniously separated into lines.

The scenery, throughout all the plays, is regulated in conformity to a rule, which the poet, by his general practice, seems to have proposed to himself. Several of his pieces are come down to us, divided into scenes as well as acts. These divisions were probably his own, as they are made on settled principles, which would hardly have been the case, had the task been executed by the players. A change of scene, with Shakspeare, most commonly implies a change of place, but always an entire evacuation of the stage. The custom of distinguishing every entrance or exit by a fresh scene, was adopted, perhaps very idly, from the French theatre.

For the length of many notes, and the accumulation of examples in others, some apology may be likewise expected. An attempt at brevity is often found to be the source of an imperfect explanation. Where a passage has been constantly misunderstood, or where the jest or pleasantry has been suffered to remain long in obscurity, more instances have been brought to clear the one, or elucidate the other, than appear at first sight to have been necessary. For these, it can only be said, that when they prove that phraseology
or

or source of merriment to have been once general, which at present seems particular, they are not quite impertinently intruded ; as they may serve to free the author from a suspicion of having employed an affected singularity of expression, or indulged himself in allusions to transient customs, which were not of sufficient notoriety to deserve ridicule or reprehension. When examples in favour of contradictory opinions are assembled, though no attempt is made to decide on either part, such neutral collections should always be regarded as materials for future criticks, who may hereafter apply them with success. Authorities, whether in respect of words, or things, are not always producible from the most celebrated writers*, yet such

* Mr. T. Warton, in his excellent *Remarks on the Fairy Queen of Spenser*, offers a similar apology for having introduced illustrations from obsolete literature. “ I fear (says he) I shall be censured for quoting too many pieces of this sort. But experience has fatally proved, that the commentator on Spenser, Jonson, and the rest of our elder poets, will in vain give specimens of his classical erudition, unless, at the same time, he brings to his work a mind intimately acquainted with those books, which, though now forgotten, were yet in common use and high repute about the time in which his authors respectively wrote, and which they consequently must have read. While these are unknown, many allusions and many imitations will either remain obscure, or lose half their beauty and propriety: “ as the figures vanish when the canvas is decayed.”

such circumstances as fall below the notice of history, can only be sought in the jest-book, the satire, or the play; and the novel, whose fashion did not out-live a week, is sometimes necessary to throw light on those annals which take in the compass of an age. Those, therefore, who would wish to have the peculiarities of Nym familiarized to their ideas, must excuse the insertion of such an epigram as best suits the purpose,

“Pope laughs at Theobald for giving us, in his edition of SHAKSPERE, a sample of

—all such READING as was never read.

But these strange and ridiculous books which Theobald quoted, were unluckily the very books which SHAKSPERE himself had studied; the knowledge of which enabled that useful editor to explain so many difficult allusions and obsolete customs in his poet, which otherwise could never have been understood. For want of this sort of literature, Pope tells us that the *dreadful Sagittary* in *Troilus and Cressida*, signifies Teucer, so celebrated for his skill in archery. Had he deigned to consult an old history, called the *Destruction of Troy*, a book which was the delight of SHAKSPERE and of his age, he would have found, that this formidable archer was no other than an imaginary beast, which the Grecian army brought against Troy. If SHAKSPERE is worth reading, he is worth explaining; and the researches used for so valuable and elegant a purpose, merit the thanks of genius and candour, not the satire of prejudice and ignorance. That labour, which so essentially contributes to the service of true taste, deserves a more honourable repository than *The Temple of Dulness*.”

however

however tedious in itself; and such as would be acquainted with the propriety of Falstaff's allusion to *stewed prunes*, should not be disgusted at a multitude of instances, which, when the point is once known to be established, may be diminished by any future editor. An author, who *catches* (as Pope expresses it) at *the Cynthia of a minute*, and does not furnish notes to his own works, is sure to lose half the praise which he might have claimed, had he dealt in allusions less temporary, or cleared up for himself those difficulties which lapse of time must inevitably create.

The author of the additional notes has rather been desirous to support old readings, than to claim the merit of introducing new ones. He desires to be regarded as one, who found the task he undertook more arduous than it seemed, while he was yet feeding his vanity with the hopes of introducing himself to the world as an editor in form. He, who has discovered in himself the power to rectify a few mistakes with ease, is naturally led to imagine, that all difficulties must yield to the efforts of future labour; and, perhaps, feels a reluctance to be undeceived at last.

Mr. Steevens desires it may be observed, that he has strictly complied with the terms exhibited in his proposals, having appropriated all such assistances, as he received, to the use of the present editor, whose judgment has, in every instance, determined on their respective merits. While he enumerates his obligations to his correspondents, it is necessary that one

comprehensive remark should be made on such communications as are omitted in this edition, though they might have proved of great advantage to a more daring commentator. The majority of these were founded on the supposition, that Shakspeare was, originally, an author correct in the utmost degree, but maimed and interpolated by the neglect or presumption of the players. In consequence of this belief, alterations have been proposed wherever a verse could be harmonized, an epithet exchanged for one more apposite, or a sentiment rendered less perplexed. Had the general current of advice been followed, the notes would have been filled with attempts at emendation, apparently unnecessary, though sometimes elegant, and as frequently with explanations of what none would have thought difficult. A constant peruser of Shakspeare will suppose whatever is easy to his own apprehension, will prove so to that of others, and consequently may pass over some real perplexities in silence. On the contrary, if in consideration of the different abilities of every class of readers, he should offer a comment on all harsh inversions of phrase, or peculiarities of expression, he will at once excite the disgust and displeasure of such as think their own knowledge or sagacity undervalued. It is difficult to fix a medium between doing too little and too much in the task of mere explanation. There are yet many passages unexplained and unintelligible, which may be reformed, at hazard of whatever licence, for exhibitions on the stage, in which the pleasure of the

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the audience is chiefly to be considered ; but must remain untouched by the critical editor, whose conjectures are limited by narrow bounds, and who gives only what he at least supposes his author to have written.

If it is not to be expected that each vitiated passage in Shakspeare can be restored, till a greater latitude of experiment shall be allowed ; so neither can it be supposed that the force of all his allusions will be pointed out, till such books are thoroughly examined, as cannot easily at present be collected, if at all. Several of the most correct lists of our dramatick pieces exhibit the titles of plays, which are not to be met with in the completest collections. It is almost unnecessary to mention any other than Mr. Garrick's, which, curious and extensive as it is, derives its greatest value from its accessibility*.

To

* There is reason to think, that about the time of the Reformation, great numbers of plays were printed, though few of that age are now to be found ; for part of queen Elizabeth's INJUNCTIONS in 1559, are particularly directed to the suppressing of " many pamphlets, PLAYES, and ballads : that no manner of person shall enterprize to print any such, &c. but under certain restrictions." Vide Sect. V. This observation is taken from Dr. Percy's Additions to his Essay on the Origin of the English Stage. It appears, likewise, from a page at the conclusion of the second volume of the entries belonging to the Stationers' company, that in the 41st year of queen Elizabeth, many new restraints

To the other evils of our civil war must be added the interruption of polite learning, and the suppression of many dramattick and poetical names, which were plunged in obscurity by tumults and revolutions, and have

straints on booksellers were laid. Among these are the following, "That no plaies be printed, excepte they bee allowed by such as have auctoritie." The records of the Stationers, however, contain the entries of some which have never yet been met with by the most successful collectors; nor are their titles to be found in any registers of the stage, whether ancient or modern. It should seem, from the same volumes, that it was customary for the Stationers to seize the whole impression of any work that had given offence, and burn it publickly at their hall, in obedience to the edicts of the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishop of London, who sometimes enjoyed these literary executions at their respective palaces. Among other works condemned to the flames by these discerning prelates, were the complete satires of bishop Hall.

Mr. Theobald, at the conclusion of the preface to his first edition of Shakspeare, asserts, that, exclusive of the dramas of Ben Jonson, and Beaumont and Fletcher, he had read "above 800 of old English plays." He omitted this assertion, however, on the republication of the same work, and, I hope, he did so, through a consciousness of its utter falsehood; for, if we except the plays of the authors already mentioned, it would be difficult to discover half the number, that were written early enough to serve the purpose for which he pretends to have perused this imaginary stock of ancient literature.

I might

have never since attracted curiosity. The utter neglect of ancient English literature continued so long, that many books may be supposed to be lost; and that curiosity, which has been now for some years increasing among us, wants materials for its operations. Books and pamphlets, printed originally in small numbers, being thus neglected, were soon destroyed; and though the capital authors were preserved, they were preserved to languish without regard. How little Shakspeare himself was once read, may be understood from Tate*, who, in his dedication to the altered play

I might add, that the private collection of Mr. Theobald, which, including the plays of Jonson, Fletcher, and Shakspeare, did not amount to many more than an hundred, remained entire, in the hands of the late Mr. Tonson, till the time of his death. It does not appear, that any other collection but the Harleian, was at that time formed; nor does Mr. Theobald's edition contain any intrinsick evidences of so comprehensive an examination of our eldest dramattick writers, as he assumes to himself the merit of having made.

* In the year 1707, Mr. N. Tate published a tragedy called *Injured Love, or the Cruel Husband*, and in the title-page of it calls himself, “*Author of the tragedy called King Lear.*”

In a book called *The Actor, or a Treatise on the Art of Playing*, 12mo. published in 1750, and imputed to Dr. Hill, is the following pretended extract from *Romeo and Juliet*, with the author's remark on it:

“The

play of *King Lear*, speaks of the original, as of an obscure piece, recommended to his notice by a friend; and the author of the *Tatler*, having occasion to quote a few lines out of *Macbeth*, was content to receive them from

“ The saints that heard our vows, and know our love,
 “ Seeing thy faith and thy unspotted truth,
 “ Will sure take care, and let no wrongs annoy thee,
 “ Upon my knees I’ll ask them every day
 “ How my kind Juliet does; and every night,
 “ In the severe distresses of my fate,
 “ As I, perhaps, shall wander through the desert,
 “ And want a place to rest my weary head on,
 “ I’ll count the stars, and bless ’em as they shine,
 “ And court them all for my dear Juliet’s safety.”

“ The reader will pardon us on this and some other occasions, that where we quote passages from plays, we give them *as the author gives them, not as the butcherly hand of a blockhead prompter may have lopped them, or as the unequal genius of some bungling critick may have attempted to mend them.* Whoever remembers the merit of the player’s speaking the things we celebrate them for, we are pretty confident, will wish he spoke them *absolutely as we give them, that is, as the author gives them.*”

Perhaps it is unnecessary to inform the reader, that not one of the lines above quoted is to be found in the *Romeo and Juliet* of Shakspeare. They are copied from the *Caius Marius* of Otway.

How little Shakspeare himself was once read, &c.]

Though

from D'Avenant's alteration of that celebrated drama, in which almost every original beauty is either awkwardly disguised, or arbitrarily omitted. So little were the defects or peculiarities of the old writers known,

Though no author appears to have been more admired in his lifetime than Shakspeare, at no very distant period after his death his compositions seem to have been neglected. Jonson had long endeavoured to depreciate him, but he and his partisans were unsuccessful in their efforts; yet about the year 1640, whether from some capricious vicissitude in the publick taste, or from a general inattention to the drama, we find Shirley complaining that no company came to our author's performances.

—————"You see
 "What audience we have; *what company*
 "To Shakspeare comes? whose mirth did once beguile
 "Dull hours, and buskin'd make even sorrow smile;
 "So lovely were the wounds, that men would say,
 "They could endure the bleeding a whole day;
 "He has but few friends lately."

Prologue to *The Sisters*.

After the Restoration, on the revival of the theatres, the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher were esteemed so much superior to those of our author, that we are told by Dryden, "two of their pieces were acted, through the year, for one of Shakspeare's." If his testimony needed any corroboration, the following lines in a *Satire* published in 1680, would afford it:

"At

known, even at the beginning of our century, that though the custom of alliteration had prevailed to that degree in the time of Shakspeare, that it became contemptible and ridiculous, yet it is made one of Waller's praises, by a writer of his life, that he first introduced this practice into English versification.

It will be expected, that some notice should be taken of the last editor of Shakspeare, and that his merits should be estimated with those of his predecessors. Little, however, can be said of a work, to the composition of which, both a large proportion of

“ At every shop while *Shakspeare's* lofty style
 “ Neglected lies, to mice and worms a spoil,
 “ Gilt on the back, just smoking from the press,
 “ The apprentice shews you D'Urfey's *Hudibras*,
 “ Crown's *Mask*, bound up with Settle's choicest labours,
 “ And promises some new essay of Babor's.”

See also the prologue to Shirley's *Love Tricks*, 1667.

“ In our old plays the humour, love, and passion,
 “ Like doublet, hose, and cloke, are out of fashion ;
 “ That which the world call'd wit in Shakspeare's age,
 “ Is laugh'd at as improper for our stage.”

From the instances mentioned by Mr. Steevens, he appears to have been equally neglected in the time of Queen Anne. During these last fifty years, ample compensation has been made to him for the bad taste and inattention of the periods above mentioned. MALONE.

the commentary, and various readings, is as yet wanting. *The Second Part of King Henry VI.* is the only play from that edition, which has been consulted in the course of this work; for as several passages there are arbitrarily omitted, and as no notice is given when other deviations are made from the old copies, it was of little consequence to examine any further. This circumstance is mentioned, lest such accidental coincidences of opinion, as may be discovered hereafter, should be interpreted into plagiarism.

It may occasionally happen, that some of the remarks long ago produced by others, are offered again as recent discoveries. It is, likewise, absolutely impossible to pronounce, with any degree of certainty, whence all the hints, which furnish matter for a commentary, have been collected, as they lay scattered in many books and papers, which were, probably, never read but once, or the particulars which they contain received only in the course of common conversation; nay, what is called plagiarism, is often no more than the result of having thought alike with others on the same subject.

The dispute about the learning of Shakspeare being now finally settled, a catalogue is added of those translated authors, whom Mr. Pope has thought proper to call

The classicks of an age that heard of none.

The reader may not be displeased to have the Greek and Roman poets, orators, &c. who had been ren-

R

dered

dered accessible to our author, exposed at one view; especially as the list has received the advantage of being corrected and amplified by the Reverend Dr. Farmer, the substance of whose very decisive pamphlet is interspersed through the notes which are added in this revisal of Dr. Johnson's Shakspeare.

To those who have advanced the reputation of our Poet, it has been endeavoured, by Dr. Johnson, in the foregoing preface, impartially to allot their dividend of fame; and it is with great regret that we now add to the catalogue, another, the consequence of whose death will, perhaps, affect not only the works of Shakspeare, but of many other writers. Soon after the first appearance of this edition, a disease, rapid in its progress, deprived the world of Mr. JACOB TONSON; a man, whose zeal for the improvement of English literature, and whose liberality to men of learning, gave him a just title to all the honours which men of learning can bestow. To suppose that a person employed in an extensive trade, lived in a state of indifference to loss and gain, would be to conceive a character incredible and romantick; but it may be justly said of Mr. TONSON, that he had enlarged his mind beyond solicitude about petty losses, and refined it from the desire of unreasonable profit. He was willing to admit those with whom he contracted, to the just advantage of their own labours; and had never learned to consider the author as an under-agent to the Bookseller. The wealth which he inherited or acquired, he enjoyed like a man conscious of the dignity

nity of a profession subservient to learning. His domestick life was elegant, and his charity was liberal. His manners were soft, and his conversation delicate : nor is, perhaps, any quality in him more to be censured, than that reserve which confined his acquaintance to a small number, and made his example less useful, as it was less extensive. He was the last commercial name of a family which will be long remembered ; and if Horace thought it not improper to convey the *SOSII* to posterity ; if rhetorick suffered no dishonour from Quintilian's dedication to *TRYPHO* ; let it not be thought that we disgrace Shakspeare, by appending to his works the name of *TONSON*.

To this prefatory advertisement I have now subjoined a chapter extracted from the *Guls Hornbook* (a satirical pamphlet written by Decker in the year 1609), as it affords the reader a more complete idea of the customs peculiar to our ancient theatres, than any other publication which has hitherto fallen in my way. See this performance, page 27.

“ C H A P. VI.

“ *How a Gallant should behave himself in a Play-House.*

“ The *theater* is your poet's Royal Exchange, upon which, their muses (that are now turn'd to merchants) meeting, barter away that light commodity of words for a lighter ware than words, *plaudities* and the *breath*

of the great *beast*, which (like the threatnings of two cowards) vanish all into aire. *Plaiers* and their *factors*, who put away the stuffe, and make the best of it they possibly can (as indeed 'tis their parts so to doe) your gallant, your courtier, and your capten, had wont to be the soundest paymasters, and, I thinke, are still the surest chapmen: and these by meanes that their heades are well stockt, deale upon this comical freight by the grosse; when your *groundling* and *gallery commoner* buyes his sport by the penny, and, like a *hagler*, is glad to utter it againe by retailing.

“Sithence then the place is so free in entertainment, allowing a stoole as well to the farmer's sonne as to your Templer: that your stinkard has the selfe same libertie to be there in his tobacco-fumes, which your sweet courtier hath: and that your carman and tinker claime as strong a voice in their suffrage, and sit to give judgment on the plaies' life and death, as well as the proudest *Momus* among the tribe of *criticks*; it is fit that hee, whom the most tailors' bils do make room for, when he comes, should not be basely (like a *vyoll*) cas'd up in a corner.

“Whether, therefore, the gatherers of the publique or private play-house, stand to receive the afternoone's rent, let our gallant (having paid it) presently advance himselfe up to the throne of the stage. I meane not into the lord's roome (which is now but the stage's suburbs). No, those boxes, by the iniquity of custome, conspiracy of waiting-women and gentlemen-ushers, that there sweat together, and the covetous sharers,

sharers, are contemptibly thrust into the reare, and much new satten is there dambd by being smothered to death in darknesse. But on the very rushes where the commedy is to daunce, yea and under the state of *Cambises* himselfe must our feather'd estridge, like a piece of ordnance, be planted valiantly (because impudently) beating downe the mewes and hisses of the opposed rascality.

“For do but cast up a reckoning, what large cummings in are purs'd up by sitting on the stage. First a conspicuous eminence is gotten, by which meanes the best and most essencial parts of a gallant (good cloathes, a proportionable legge, white hand, the Persian locke, and a tollerable beard), are perfectly revealed.

“By sitting on the stage you have a sign'd patent to engrosse the whole commodity of censure; may lawfully presume to be a girder; and stand at the helme to steere the passage of scænes, yet no man shall once offer to hinder you from obtaining the title of an insolent over-weening coxcombe.

“By sitting on the stage, you may (without traueelling for it) at the very next doore, aske whose play it is: and by that quest of inquiry, the law warrants you to avoid much mistaking: if you know not the author, you may raile against him; and, peradventure, so behave yourselfe, that you may enforce the author to know you.

“By sitting on the stage, if you be a knight, you may happily get you a mistresse: if a meere *Fleet-Street*

gentleman, a wife: but assure yourselfe by continuall residence, you are the first and principall man in election to begin the number of *We three*.

“ By spreading your body on the stage, and by being a justice in examining of plaies, you shall put yourselfe into such a true scaenical authority, that some poet shall not dare to present his muse rudely before your eyes, without having first unmaskt her, rifled her, and discovered all her bare and most mystical parts before you at a taverne, when you most knightly, shall, for his paines, pay for both their suppers.

“ By sitting on the stage, you may (with small cost) purchase the deere acquaintance of the boyes: have a good stoole for sixpence: at any time know what particular part any of the infants present: get your match lighted, examine the play-suits' lace, and, perhaps, win wagers upon laying 'tis copper, &c. And to conclude, whether you be a foole or a justice of peace, a cuckold or a capten, a lord-maior's sonne or a daw-cocke, a knave or an under-shrieve, of what stampe soever you be, currant or counterfet, the stage-like time will bring you to most perfect light, and lay you open: neither are you to be hunted from thence, though the scar-crowes in the yard hoot you, hisse at you, spit at you, yea, throw dirt even in your teeth: 'tis most gentleman-like patience to endure all this, and to laugh at the silly animals. But if the rabble, with a full throat, crie, away with the foole, you were worse than a madman to tarry by it: for the gentleman and the foole should never sit on the stage together.

“ Mary,

“ Mary, let this observation go hand in hand with the rest : or rather, like a country-serving man, some five yards before them. Present not your selfe on the stage (especially at a new play) untill the quaking prologue hath (by rubbing) got cullor into his cheekes, and is ready to give the trumpets their cue, that hees upon point to enter : for then it is time, as though you were one of the *properties*, or that you dropt of the *hangings* to creep from behind the arras, with your *tripos* or three-legged stoole in one hand, and a teston mounted betweene a fore-finger and a thumb, in the other : for if you should bestow your person upon the vulgar, when the belly of the house is but halfe full, your apparell is quite eaten up, the fashion lost, and the proportion of your body in more danger to be devoured, then if it were served up in the Counter amongst the Poultry : avoid that as you would the bastome. It shall crowne you with rich commendation to laugh alowd in the midst of the most serious and saddest scene of the terriblest tragedy : and to let that clapper (your tongue) be tost so high, that all the house may ring of it : your lords use it ; your knights are apes to the lords, and do so too : your inne-a-court-man is zany to the knights, and (many very scurvily) comes, likewise, limping after it : bee thou a beagle to them all, and never din snuffing till you have sented then : for by talking and laughing (like a ploughman in a morris) you heape *Pelion* upon *Ossa*, glory upon glory : as, first, all the eyes in the galleries will leave walking after the players, and onely follow you :

you: the simplest dolt in the house snatches up your name, and when he meetes you in the streetes, or that you fall into his hands in the middle of a watch, his word shall be taken for you: heele cry, *Hees such a gallant*, and you passe. Secondly, you publish your temperance to the world, in that you seeme not to resort thither to taste vaine pleasures with a hungrie appetite; but onely as a gentleman, to spend a foolish houre or two, because you can doe nothing else. Thirdly, you mightily disrelish the audience, and disgrace the author: mary, you take up (though it be at the worst hand) a strong opinion of your owne judgement, and inforce the poet to take pity of your weaknesse, and by some dedicated sonnet to bring you into a better paradise, onely to stop your mouth.

“ If you can (either for love or money) provide your selfe a lodging by the water side: for above the conveniencie it brings to shun shoulder-clapping, and to ship away your cockatrice betimes in the morning, it addes a kind of state unto you, to be carried from thence to the staires of your play-house: hate a sculler (remember that) worse then to be acquainted with one ath' scullery. No, your oares are your onely sea-crabs, boord them, and take heed you never go twice together with one paire: often shifting is a great credit to gentlemen: and that dividing of your fare wil make the poore watersnaks be ready to pul you in peeces to enjoy your custome. No matter whether upon landing you have money or no; you may swim
in

in twentie of their boates over the river upon *ticket*: mary, when silver comes in, remember to pay trebble their fare, and it will make your flounder-catchers to send more thankes after you, when you doe not draw, then when you doe: for they know, it will be their owne another daie.

“ Before the play begins, fall to cardes; you may win or loose (as fencers doe in a prize) and beate one another by confederacie, yet share the money when you meete at supper: notwithstanding, to gul the ragga-muffins that stand a loofe gaping at you, throw the cards (having first torne foure or five of them) round about the stage, just upon the third sound, as though you had lost: it skils not if the foure knaves ly on their backs, and outface the audience, there’s none such fooles as dare take exceptions at them, because ere the play go off, better knaves than they will fall into the company.

“ Now, Sir, if the writer be a fellow that hath either epigram’d you, or hath had a flirt at your mistris, or hath brought either your feather, or your red beard, or your little legs, &c. on the stage, you shall disgrace him worse then by tossing him in a blanket, or givin him the bastinado in a taverne, if in the middle of his play (bee it pastorall or comedy, morall or tragedy) you rise with a skreud and discontented face from your stoole, to be gone: no matter whether the scenes be good or no; the better they are, the worse doe you distast them: and beeing on your feete, sneake not away like a coward, but salute all your
gentle

gentle acquaintance that are spread either on the rushes or on stooles about you, and draw what troope you can from the stage after you: the *mimicks* are beholden to you, for allowing them elbow roome: their poet cries, perhaps, a pox go with you, but care not you for that; there's no musick without frets.

“ Mary, if either the company, or indisposition of the weather, binde you to sit it out, my counsell is then that you turn plaine ape: take up a rush and tickle the earnest eares of your fellow gallants, to make other fooles fall a laughing; mew at the passionate speeches, blare at merrie, finde fault with the musicke, whewe at the children's action, whistle at the songs; and above all, curse the sharers, that whereas the same day you had bestowed forty shillings on an embroidered felt and feather (Scotch-fashion) for your mistres in the court, or your punck in the cittie, within two houres after, you encounter with the very same block on the stage, when the haberdasher swore to you the impression was extant but that morning.

“ To conclude, hoord up the finest play-scraps you can get, upon which your leane wit may most savourly feede, for want of other stuffe, when the *Arcadian* and *Euphuis'd* gentlewomen have their tongues sharpened to set upon you: that qualitie (next to your shittlecocke) is the only furniture to a courtier that's but a new beginner, and is but in his ABC of complement. The next places that are fil'd after the play-houses bee emptied, are (or ought to be) tavernes: into a taverne then let us next march, where the
braines

braines of one hoghead must be beaten out to make up another."

I should have attempted, on the present occasion, to enumerate all other pamphlets, &c. from whence particulars relative to the conduct of our early theatres might be collected, but that Dr. Percy, in his first volume of *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (third edit. p. 128, &c.) has extracted such passages from them, as tend to the illustration of this subject; to which he has added more accurate remarks than my experience in these matters would have enabled me to supply.

ON THE ORIGIN
OF THE
ENGLISH STAGE, &c.

It is well known that dramatick poetry, in this and most other nations of Europe, owes its origin, or at least its revival, to those religious shows, which in the dark ages were usually exhibited on the more solemn festivals. At those times they were wont to represent in the churches the lives and miracles of the saints, or some of the more important stories of scripture. And as the most mysterious subjects were frequently chosen, such as the Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection of Christ, &c. these exhibitions acquired the general name of MYSTERIES. At first they were probably a kind of dumb shows, intermingled, it may be, with a few short speeches; at length they grew into a regular series of connected dialogues, formally divided into acts and scenes. Specimens of these in their most improved state (being at best but poor artless compositions) may be seen among Dodsley's OLD PLAYS and in Osborne's HARLEYAN MISCEL. How they were exhibited in their most simple form, we may learn from an ancient
novel

novel (often quoted by our old dramatic poets *) entitled *a merye Jest of a man that was called Howleglas* † &c. being a translation from the Dutch language, in which he is named *Ulenspiegel*. Howleglas, whose waggish tricks are the subject of this book, after many adventures comes to live with a priest, who makes him his parish-clerk. This priest is described as keeping a LEMAN or concubine, who had but one eye, to whom Howleglas owed a grudge for revealing his rogueries to his master. The story thus proceeds, “ And than in the meane season, “ while Howleglas was parysh clarke, at Easter they “ should play the resurrection of our Lorde : and for “ because than the men wer not learned, nor could “ not read, the priest toke his leman, and put her in “ the grave for an Aungel ; and this seeing, Howleglas “ toke to him iij of the symplest persons that were in “ the towne, that played the iij Maries ; and the Person “ [i. e. Parson or Rector] played Christe, with a “ baner in his hand. Than saide Howleglas to the “ symple persons ; Whan the Aungel asketh you, “ whome you seeke, you may saye, The parsons leman “ with one iye. Than it fortuneth that the tyme was “ come that they must playe, and the Aungel asked

* See Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*, Act 3. sc. 4. and his *Masque of the Fortunate Isles*. Whalley's Edit. vol. ii. p. 49. vol. vi. p. 190.

† Howleglass is said in the Preface to have died in M.cccc.l. At the end of the book, in M.cccc.l.

“ them whom they sought, and than sayd they, as
 “ Howleglas had shewed and lerned them afore, and
 “ than answered they, Weseke the priests leman with
 “ one iye. And than the prieste might heare that he
 “ was mocked. And whan the priestes leman herd
 “ that, she arose out of the grave, and would have
 “ smyten with her fist Howleglas upon the cheke, but
 “ she missed him and smote one of the simple persons
 “ that played one of the thre Maries; and he gave
 “ her another; and than toke she him by the heare
 “ [hair]; and that seing his wyfe, came running
 “ hastely to smite the priestes leman; and than the
 “ priest seing this, caste down hys baner and went to
 “ helpe his woman, so that the one gave the other
 “ sore strokes, and made great noyse in the church.
 “ And than Howleglas seyng them lyinge together
 “ by the eares in the bodi of the church, went
 “ his way out of the village, and came no more
 “ there*.”

As the old Mysteries frequently required the representation of some allegorical personage, such as Death, Sin, Charity, Faith, and the like, by degrees the rude poets of those unlettered ages began to form complete dramattick pieces, consisting entirely of such personifications. These they entitled MORAL PLAYS, or MORALITIES. The Mysteries were very inartificial, representing the scripture stories simply according to

* *C. Imprynted. . . by Wylliam Copland: without date, in 4to. black letter, among Mr. Garrick's Old Plays, K. vol. x.*

the letter. But the Moralities are not devoid of invention; they exhibit outlines of the dramatick art: they contain something of a fable or plot, and even attempt to delineate characters and manners. I have now before me two that were printed early in the reign of Henry VIII; in which I think one may plainly discover the seeds of Tragedy and Comedy; for which reason I shall give a short analysis of them both.

One of them is entitled *Every-Man**. The subject of this piece is the summoning of man out of the world by death; and its moral, that nothing will then avail him but a well-spent life and the comforts of religion. This subject and moral are opened in a monologue spoken by the MESSENGER (for that was the name generally given by our ancestors to the prologue on their rude stage): then GOD † is represented; who, after some general complaints on the degeneracy of mankind, calls for DEATH, and orders him to bring before his tribunal EVERY-MAN, for so is called the personage who represents the human race. EVERY-MAN appears, and receives the summons with all the marks of confusion and terror. When Death is withdrawn, Every-man applies for relief in this distress to

* This Play has been lately reprinted by Mr. HAWKINS in his 3 vols. of Old Plays, entitled, THE ORIGIN OF THE ENGLISH DRAMA, 12mo, Oxford, 1773. See vol. i. p. 27.

† The second person of the Trinity seems to be meant.

FELLOWSHIP, KINDRED, GOODS, or Riches, but they successively renounce and forsake him. In this disconsolate state he betakes himself to GOOD-DEDES, who, after upbraiding him with his long neglect of her*, introduces him to her sister KNOWLEDGE, and she leads him to the “holy man CONFESSION,” who appoints him penance: this he inflicts upon himself on the stage, and then withdraws to receive the sacraments of the priest. On his return he begins to wax faint, and after STRENGTH, BEAUTY, DISCRETION, and FIVE WITS† have all taken their final leave of him, gradually expires on the stage; Good-Dedes still accompanying him to the last. Then an AUNCEL descends to sing his *requiem*: and the epilogue is spoken by a person, called DOCTOR, who recapitulates the whole, and delivers the moral,

“ This memoriall men may have in mynde,
 “ Ye herers, take it of worth old and yonge,
 “ And forsake pryde, for he disceyveth you inthende
 “ And remembre Beautè, Five Witts, Strength and
 Discrecion,
 “ They all at last do Every-Man forsake;
 “ Save his Good Dedes there dothe he take:

* Those above-mentioned are male characters.

† i. e. The Five Senses. These are frequently exhibited as five distinct personages upon the Spanish stage (see Riccoboni, p. 98.); but our moralist has represented them all by one character.

“ But

“ But beware, for and they be small,
 “ Before God he hath no helpe at all.” &c.

From this short analysis it may be observed, that *Every-Man* is a grave solemn piece, not without some rude attempts to excite terror and pity, and therefore may not improperly be referred to the class of tragedy. It is remarkable that in this old simple drama, the fable is conducted upon the strictest model of the Greek tragedy. The action is simply one, the time of action is that of the performance, the scene is never changed, nor the stage ever empty. EVERY-MAN, the hero of the piece, after his first appearance never withdraws, except when he goes out to receive the sacraments, which could not be well exhibited in publick; and during his absence KNOWLEDGE descants on the excellence and power of the priesthood, somewhat after the manner of the Greek chorus. And indeed, except in the circumstance of *Every-Man*'s expiring on the stage, the *Sampson Agonistes* of Milton is hardly formed on a severer plan*.

The other play is entitled *Hick-Scorner* †, and bears no distant resemblance to comedy; its chief aim seems

* See more of EVERY-MAN, in vol. ii, Pref. to B. II. Of the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, Note.

† *Emprynted by me Wynkyn de Worde*, no date; in 4to. black letter. This Play has also been reprinted by Mr. HAWKINS in his “*Origin of the English Drama*,” Vol. i, p. 69.

to be to exhibit characters and manners, its plot being much less regular than the foregoing. The prologue is spoken by PITY represented under the character of an aged pilgrim, he is joined by CONTEMPLACYON and PERSEVERANCE, two holy men, who after lamenting the degeneracy of the age, declare their resolution of stemming the torrent. Pity then is left upon the stage, and presently found by FREWYLL, representing a lewd debauchee, who, with his dissolute companion IMAGINACION, relate their manner of life, and not without humour describe the stews and other places of base resort. They are presently joined by HICK-SCORNER, who is drawn as a libertine returned from travel, and agreeably to his name scoffs at religion. These three are described as extremely vicious, who glory in every act of wickedness: at length two of them quarrel, and PITY endeavours to part the fray; on this they fall upon him, put him in the stocks, and there leave him. Pity then descants in a kind of lyric measure on the profligacy of the age, and in this situation is found by Perseverance and Contemplacion, who set him at liberty, and advise him to go in search of the delinquents. As soon as he is gone, Frewill appears again; and, after relating in a very comic manner some of his rogueries and escapes from justice, is rebuked by the two holy men, who, after a long altercation, at length convert him and his libertine companion Imaginacion from their vicious course of life: and then the play ends with a few verses from Perseverance by way of epilogue. This and every

Morality

Morality I have seen, conclude with a solemn prayer. They are all of them in rhyme; in a kind of loose stanza, intermixed with distichs.

It would be needless to point out the absurdities in the plan and conduct of the foregoing play: they are evidently great. It is sufficient to observe, that, bating the moral and religious reflection of PITY, &c. the piece is of a comic cast, and contains a humorous display of some of the vices of the age. Indeed, the author has generally been so little attentive to the allegory, that we need only substitute other names to his personages, and we have real characters and living manners.

We see, then, that the writers of these Moralities were upon the very threshold of real Tragedy and Comedy; and, therefore, we are not to wonder that Tragedies and Comedies, in form, soon after took place, especially as the revival of learning about this time, brought them acquainted with the Roman and Grecian models.

II. At what period of time the Mysteries and Moralities had their rise, it is difficult to discover. Holy plays, representing the miracles and sufferings of the saints, appear to have been no novelty in the reign of Henry II. and a lighter sort of interludes were not then unknown*. In Chaucer's time "Plays of

* See Fitz-Stephens's description of London, preserved by Stow. *Londonia pro spectaculis theatralibus, pro ludis scenicis, ludos habet sanctiores, representationes miraculorum, &c.*

of Miracles" in Lent, were the common resort of idle gossips *. Towards the latter end of Henry the VIIth's reign, Moralities were so common, that John Rastel, brother-in-law to Sir Thomas More, conceived a design of making them the vehicle of science and natural philosophy. With this view he published "*A new interlude and a mery of the nature of the iiij elements, declarynge many proper points of philosophy naturall, and of dyvers straunge landys*†, &c. It

Ec. He is thought to have written in the reign of Henry II. and to have died in that of Richard I. It is true, at the end of his book we find mentioned *Henricum regem tertium*; but this is, doubtless, Henry the Second's son, who was crowned during the life of his father, in 1170, and is generally distinguished as *Rex juvenis*, *Rex filius*, and sometimes they were jointly named *Reges Angliæ*. From a passage in his Chapter *De Religione*, it should seem that the body of St. Thomas Becket was just then a new acquisition to the church of Canterbury.

* See Prologue to Wife of Bath's Tale, v. 338. Urry's edition.

† Mr. Garrick has an imperfect copy (Old Plays, i. vol. 3.), The Dramatis Personæ are, "The Messengere [or Prologue] Nature naturate. Humanytè. Studyous Desire. Sensuall Appetyte. The Taverner. Experyence. Ygnorance. (Also, yf ye lyst, ye may brynge in a dysgysynge.)" Afterwards follows a table of the matters handled in the interlude. Among which are "Of certeyn conclusions prouvyng the yerthe must nedes be rounde, and that it hengyth in the myddes of the fyrmament, and

It is observable, that the poet speaks of the discovery of America as then recent;

——“ Within this xx yere

“ Westwarde be founde new landes

“ That we never harde tell of before this,” &c.

The West-Indies were discovered by Columbus in 1492, which fixes the writing of this play to about 1510. The play of *Hick-Scorner* was, probably, somewhat more ancient, as he still more imperfectly alludes to the American discoveries, under the name of “the Newe founde Ilonde,” sign. A. vij.

It appears from the play of *The Four Elements*, that Interludes were then very common: The profession of *PLAYER* was no less common; for in an old satire, entitled, *Cock Lorelles Bote**, the author enumerates all the most common trades or callings, as, “Carpenters, Coopers, Joyners, &c. and among others, *PLAYERS*, though it must be acknowledged he has placed them in no very reputable company.

“ and that yt is in circumference above xxi M. myle.”——

“ Of certeyne points of cosmographie—and of dyvers

“ straunge regyons—and of the new founde landys and the

“ maner of the people.” This part is extremely curious,

as it shows what notions were entertained of the new American discoveries by our own countrymen.

* Printed at the Sun, in Fleet-Street, by W. de Worde, no date, bl. l. 4to.

“ *PLAYERS*,

“PLAYERS, purse-cutters, money-batterers,
 “Golde-washers, tomblerers, jogelers,
 “Pardoner’s, &c.” Sign. B. vj.

It is observable, that in the old Moralities of *Hick-Scorner*, *Every-Man*, &c. there is no kind of stage direction for the exits and entrances of the personages, no division of acts and scenes. But in the moral interlude of *Lusty Juventus**, written under Edward VI. the exits and entrances begin to be noted in the margin†: at length, in Q. Elizabeth’s reign, Moralities appeared formally divided into acts and scenes, with a regular prologue, &c. One of these is reprinted by Dodsley,

In the time of Henry VIII. one or two dramatick pieces had been published under the classical names of Comedy and Tragedy‡, but they appear not to have

* Described in vol. ii. Preface to Book II. The Dramatis Personæ of this piece are, “Messenger. Lusty Juventus. Good Counsaill. Knowledge. Sathan the devyll. Hypocrisie. Fellowship. Abominable-lyving [an Harlot,] God’s-merciful-promises.”

† I have also discovered some few *Exeats* and *Intrats* in the very old Interlude of the *Four Elements*.

‡ Bishop Bale had applied the name of Tragedy to his *Mystery of God’s Promises*, in 1538. In 1540, John Palsgrave, B. D. had republished a Latin comedy, called *Acolastus*, with an English version. Holingshed tells us, (vol. iii. p. 850,) that so early as 1520, the king had “a
 “goodlie

have been intended for popular use: it was not till the religious ferments had subsided, that the publick had leisure to attend to dramattick poetry. In the reign of Elizabeth, Tragedies and Comedies began to appear in form, and could the poets have persevered, the first models were good. *Gorboduc*, a regular tragedy, was acted in 1561*; and Gascoigne, in 1566, exhibited *Jocasta*, a translation from Euripides, as also, *The Supposes*, a regular comedy, from Ariosto: near thirty years before any of Shakspeare's were printed.

The people, however, still retained a relish for their old Mysteries and Moralities†, and the popular dramattick poets seem to have made them their models. The graver sort of Moralities appear to have given birth to our modern TRAGEDY; as our COMEDY evidently took its rise from the lighter interludes of

“goodlie comedie of Plautus plaied” before him at Greenwich; but this was in Latin, as Mr. FARMER informs us in his late curious “Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare.” 8vo. p. 31.

* See Ames, p. 316.—This play appears to have been first printed under the name of *Gorboduc*; then under that of *Ferrer and Porrer*, in 1569; and again, under *Gorboduc*, 1590.—Ames calls the first edition Quarto; Langbaine, Octavo; and Tanner, 12mo.

† The general reception the old Moralities had upon the stage, will account for the fondness of all our first poets for allegory. Subjects of this kind were familiar to every body.

that

that kind. And as most of these pieces contain an absurd mixture of religion and buffoonery, an eminent critick * has well deduced from thence the origin of our unnatural TRAGI-COMEDIES. Even after the people had been accustomed to Tragedies and Comedies, Moralities still kept their ground: one of them entitled *The New Custom* † was printed so late as 1573: at length they assumed the name of MASQUES ‡, and with some classical improvements, became in the two following reigns the favourite entertainments of the court.

As for the old Mysteries, which ceased to be acted after the Reformation, they seem to have given rise to a third species of stage exhibition, which, though now confounded with Tragedy or Comedy, were by our first dramattick writers considered as quite distinct from them both: these were Historical Plays, or HISTORIES, a species of dramattick writing, which resembled the old Mysteries, in representing a series of historical events simply in the order of time in which they happened, without any regard to the three great unities. These pieces seem to differ from Tragedy, just as much as Historical poems do from Epick: as the *Pharsalia*

* Bp. Warburton's Shakspeare, vol. v.

† Reprinted among Dodsley's Old Plays, vol. i.

‡ In some of these appeared characters full as extraordinary as in any of the old Moralities. In Ben Jonson's *Masque of Christmas*, 1616, one of the personages is MINCED PYE.

does from the *Æneid*. What might contribute to make dramattick poetry take this turn was this; soon after the Mysteries ceased to be exhibited, there was published a large collection of poetical narratives, called *The Mirrour for Magistrates**, wherein a great number of the most eminent characters in English history are drawn, relating their own misfortunes. This book was popular, and of a dramattick cast, and therefore, as an elegant writer † has well observed, might have its influence in producing Historick Plays. These narratives, probably, furnished the subjects, and the ancient Mysteries suggested the plan.

That our old writers considered Historical Plays as somewhat distinct from Tragedy and Comedy, appears from numberless passages of their works. “Of late
“ days,” says Stow, “instead of those stage-playes ‡
“ have been used Comedies, Tragedies, Enterludes,
“ and HISTORIES, both true and fained.” Survey of London ||.—Beaumont and Fletcher, in the prologue to *The Captain*, say,

“ This is nor Comedy, nor Tragedy,
“ Nor HISTORY.”——

* The first part of which was printed in 1559.

† Catalogue of Royal and Noble authors, vol. i. p. 166, 7.

‡ The Creation of the World, acted at Skinner’s-Well, in 1409.

|| See Mr. Warton’s Observations, vol. ii. p. 109.

Polonius, in *Hamlet*, commends the actors, as the best in the world “either for Tragedie, Comedie, “HISTORIE, Pastorall,” &c. And Shakspeare’s friends, Heminge and Condell, in the first folio edition of his plays, in 1623, have not only entitled their book, “Mr. William Shakspeare’s Comedies, “HISTORIES, and Tragedies:” but, in their Table of Contents, have arranged them under those three several heads; placing in the class of HISTORIES, “King John, Richard II. Henry IV. 2 parts, Henry V. Henry VI. 3 parts, Richard III. and Henry “VIII.”

This distinction deserves the attention of the critics: for if it be the first canon of sound criticism, to examine any work by those rules the author prescribed for his observance, then we ought not to try Shakspeare’s HISTORIES by the general laws of Tragedy or Comedy. Whether the rule itself be vicious or not, is another inquiry: but certainly we ought to examine a work only by those principles, according to which it was composed. This would save a deal of impertinent criticism.

III. We have now brought the inquiry as low as was intended, but cannot quit it, without entering into a short description of what one may call the œconomy of the ancient English stage.

Such was the fondness of our forefathers for dramatick entertainments, that not fewer than NINETEEN Playhouses had been opened before the year 1633, when

when Prynne published his *Histriomastix* *. From this writer it should seem that “tobacco, wine, and “beer †” were in those days the usual accommodations in the theatre, as now at Sadler’s Wells.

* He speaks in page 492, of the playhouses in Bishopsgate-Street, and on Ludgate-Hill, which are not among the SEVENTEEN enumerated in the Preface to Dodsley’s *Old Plays*.

† So, I think, we may infer from the following passage, viz. “How many are there, who according to their several qualities, spend 2d. 3d. 4d. 6d. 12d. 18d. 2s. and “sometimes 4s. or 5s. at a playhouse, day by day, if “coach-hire, boat-hire, tobacco, wine, beere, and such “like vaine expences, which playes doe usually occasion, “be cast into the reckoning?” Prynne’s *Histriomastix*, p. 322.

But that Tobacco was smoked in the play-houses, appears from Taylor, the Water-Poet, in his Proclamation for Tobacco’s Propagation. “Let PLAY-HOUSES, drinking-schools, taverns, &c. be continually haunted with “the contaminous vapours of it; nay (if it be possible) “bring it into the CHURCHES, and there choak up their “preachers.” (Works, p. 253.) And this was really the case at Cambridge: James I. sent a letter in 1607, against “taking Tobacco” in St. Mary’s. So I learn from my friend, Mr. FARMER.

A gentleman has informed me, that once going into a church in Holland, he saw the male part of the audience sitting with their hats on, smoking tobacco, while the preacher was holding forth in his morning-gown.

With regard to the players themselves, the several companies were retainers, or menial servants to particular noblemen*, who protected them in the exercise of their profession: and many of them were occasionally strollers, that travelled from one gentleman's house to another. Yet so much were they encouraged, that, notwithstanding their multitude, some of them acquired large fortunes. Edward Allen, master of the playhouse called the globe, who founded Dulwich College, is a known instance. And an old writer† speaks of the very inferior actors, whom he calls the Hirelings,

* See the Preface to Dodsley's Old Plays.—The author of an old Invective against the Stage, called, A third Blast of Retrait from Plaies, &c. 1580. 12mo. says, “Alas! that private affection should so raigne in the nobilitie, that to pleasure their servants, and to upholde them in their vanitye, they should restraine the magistrates from executing their office! They [the nobility] are thought to be covetous, by permitting their servants . . . to live at the devotion or almes of other men, passing from countrie to countrie, from one gentleman's house to another, offering their service, which is a kind of beggerie. Who indeede, to speake more trulie, are become beggers for their servants. For, comonlie, the good-wil men beare to their Lordes, make them draw the stringes of their purses to extend their liberalitie.” Vide page 75, 76, &c.

† Stephen Gosson, in his Schoole of Abuse, 1579. 12mo. folio 23, says thus of what he terms in his margin,

PLAYERS

Hirelings, as living in a degree of splendour, which was thought enormous in that frugal age.

At the same time, the ancient prices of admission were often very low. Some houses had penny-benches, * The “two-penny gallery” is mentioned in the prologue to Beaumont and Fletcher’s *Woman-Hater*. And seats of three-pence and a groat seem to be intended in the passage of *Prynne* above referred to. Yet different houses varied in their prices: That play-

PLAYERS-MEN: “Over-lashing in apparel is so common
“a fault, that the very hyerlings of some of our Players,
“which stand at revirion of vi. s. by the week, jet under
“gentlemen’s noses in sutis of silke, exercising themselves
“to prating on the stage, and common scoffing when they
“come abrode, where they look askance over the shoulder
“at every man, of whom, the Sunday before, they begged
“an almes. I speake not this, as though everye one that
“professeth the qualitie, so abused himselfe, for it is well
“known, that some of them are sober, discreete, properly learned, honest housholders and citizens, well
“thought on among their neighbours at home,” [he seems to mean EDWARD ALLEN, above mentioned] “though
“the pryde of their shadowes (I meane those hangbyes,
“whom they succour with stipend) cause them to be
“somewhat ill-talked of abroad.”

* So a MS. of *Oldys*, from Tom Nash, an old pamphlet-writer. And this is confirmed by Taylor, the Water-Poet, in his *Praise of Beggerie*, (page 99.)

“Yet have I seen a begger with his many, [sc. vermin]
“Come at a Play-house, all in for one penny.”

T i i j

house,

house, called the HOPE, had five several priced seats from sixpence to half a crown*. But the general price of what is now called the PIT, seems to have been a shilling†.

The day originally set apart for theatrical exhibition, appears to have been Sunday; probably because the first dramattick pieces were of a religious cast. During a great part of Queen Elizabeth's reign, the playhouses were only licensed to be opened on that day‡: but, before the end of her reign, or soon after, this abuse was probably removed.

The

* Induction to Ben Jonson's Bartholomew-Fair.

† Shakspeare's Prologue to Henry VIII.—Beaumont and Fletcher's Prologue to the Captain, and to the Mad-Lover. The PIT, probably, had its name from one of the Playhouses having been a Cock-Pit.

‡ So Stephen Gosson, in his Schoole of Abuse, 1579, 12mo. speaking of the Players, says, "These, because
" they are allowed to play every Sunday, make iiij. or v.
" Sundayes, at least, every week." fol. 24.—So the Author of A Second and Third Blast of Retrait from Plaies, "Let the magistrate but repel them from the
" libertie of plaieing on the Sabbath-daie. To
" plaie on the Sabbath is but a privilege of sufferance,
" and might with ease be repelled, were it thoroughly
" followed." page 61, 62. So again, "Is not the Sabbath
" of al other daies the most abused? . . . Wherefore, abuse
" not so the Sabbath-daie, my brethren; leave not the
" temple of the Lord." "Those unsaverie morsels
" of

The usual time of acting was early in the afternoon*, plays being generally performed by day-light†. All female parts were performed by men, no English actress being ever seen on the publick stage ‡ before the civil wars. And as for the playhouse furniture and

“ of unseemelie sentences, passing out of the mouth of a
 “ ruffenlie plaier, doth more content the hungrie humors
 “ of the rude multitude, and carrieth better rellish in
 “ their mouthes, than the bread of the worde, &c.”
 Vide page 63, 65, 69, &c. I do not recollect that exclamations of this kind occur in Prynne, whence I conclude that this enormity no longer subsisted in his time.

It should also seem, from the author of the Third Blast, above quoted, that the Churches still continued to be used occasionally for theatres. Thus in page 77, he says, “ that
 “ the Players (who, as has been observed, were servants of the nobility), “ under the title of their maisters, or as
 “ reteiners, are priviledged to roave abroad, and permitted
 “ to publish their mametree in everie temple of God, and
 “ that throughout England, unto the horrible contempt of
 “ praier.”

* “ He entertains us (says Overbury, in his character of
 “ an Actor) in the best leasure of our life, that is, be-
 “ tweene meales; the most unfit time either for study, or
 “ bodily exercise.”—Even so late as in the reign of Charles II. Plays generally began at three in the afternoon.

† See Biogr. Brit. I. 117. n. D.

‡ I say “ no ENGLISH Actress—on the PUBLICK
 “ Stage,” because Prynne speaks of it as an unusual enormity, that “ they had French-women actors in a play not
 “ long

and ornaments, though some houses were probably more decorated than others, yet, in general, “they
 “ had no other scenes nor decorations of the stage,
 “ but only old tapestry, and the stage strewed with
 “ rushes, with habits accordingly* ;” as we are assured in a short discourse on the English stage, subjoined to Flecknoe’s *LOVE’S KINGDOM*, 1674. 12mo.

“ long since personated in Black-Friars Playhouse.” This was in 1629, vide p. 215. And though female parts were performed by men or boys on the publick stage, yet in Masques at Court, the Queen and her ladies made no scruple to perform the principal parts, especially in the reigns of James I. and Charles I.

Sir William Davenant, after the Restoration, introduced women, scenery, and higher prices. See Cibber’s *Apology for his own Life*.

* It appears from an epigram of Taylor, the Water-Poet, that one of the principal theatres in his time, viz. The Globe on the Bankside, Southwark (which Ben Jonson calls the Glory of the Bank, and Fort of the whole Parish), had been covered with thatch till it was burnt down in 1613.—(See Taylor’s *Sculler*. Epig. 22. p. 31. Jonson’s *Execration on Vulcan*.)

Puttenham tells us, they used Vizards in his time, “ partly
 “ to supply the want of players, when there were more parts
 “ than there were persons, or that it was not thought meet to
 “ trouble . . . princes chambers with too many folks.” [*Art of Eng. Poes.* 1589. p. 26.] From the last clause, it should seem that they were chiefly used in the *MASQUES* at Court.

ADDITIONS
TO THE ESSAY
ON THE
ORIGIN of the ENGLISH STAGE.

IT is not easy to ascertain the time when Plays of Miracles began in England, but they appear to have been exhibited here very soon after the conquest. Mat. Paris tells us, that Geoffery, afterwards Abbot of St. Albans, a Norman, who had been sent for over by Abbot Richard to take upon him the direction of the school of that monastery, coming too late, went to Dunstable, and taught in the abbey there; where he caused to be acted (probably by his scholars) a **MIRACLE-PLAY** of **ST. CATHARINE**, composed by himself*. This was long before the year 1119, and probably

* *Apud Dunestapliam quendam ludum de sancta Katerina (quem MIRACULA vulgariter appellamus) fecit. Ad quæ decoranda, petiit a sacrista sancti Albani, ut sibi Capæ Chorales accommodarentur, et obtinuit. Et fuit ludus ille de sancta Katerina. Vitæ Abbat. ad fin. Hist. Mat. Paris, fol. 1639. p. 56.—We see here that plays of Miracles were become common enough in the time of Mat. Paris, who flourished about*

probably within the 11th century. The above play of *ST. CATHARINE* was, for aught that appears, the first spectacle of this sort that was exhibited in these kingdoms: and an eminent French writer thinks it was even the first attempt towards the revival of Dramatick Entertainments in all Europe; being long before the Representations of MYSTERIES in France; for these did not begin till the year 1398*.

Again, the learned and ingenious historian of the council of Constance † ascribes to the English the introduction of Plays into Germany. He tells us that the Emperor having been absent from the council for some time, was at his return received with great rejoicings, and that the English fathers in particular did, upon that occasion, cause a sacred comedy to be acted before him on Sunday the 31st of January 1417; the subjects of which were: *THE NATIVITY OF OUR SAVIOUR; THE ARRIVAL OF THE EASTERN MAGI; and THE MASSACRE by HEROD.* Thence it appears, says this

about 1240. But that indeed appears from the more early account of FITZ-STEPHENS: see p. 134. note; see also the very correct Edition of this old writer, with valuable notes, [lately published by the Rev. Mr. PEGGE,] *Lond.* 1774, 4^{to}.

* Vid. *Abregé Chron. de l'Hist. de Fr.* par M. HEN-AULT. à l'an. 1179.

† M. L'ENFANT, vid. *Hist. du Conc. de Constance*, vol. ii. p. 440.

writer,

writer, that the Germans are obliged to the English for the invention of this sort of spectacles, unknown to them before that period.

But the fondness of our ancestors for this piece of dramattick exhibition, and some other curious particulars relating to the early history of the English stage, will appear from a large MS. containing the ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF HENRY PERCY, 5th Earl of Northumberland *, Anno Dom. 1512. In the following Extracts from this book it will be seen that the exhibiting of the old mysteries or scripture plays entered into the stated regulations of domestick œconomy in the houses of our ancient nobility, and that it was as much the business of the Chaplain in those days to compose Plays for the family, as it is now for him to make Sermons.

I shall give the extracts in the same order in which they occur in different parts of the book, viz.

* This MS. belongs to the present ILLUSTRIOUS DESCENDANTS of that Nobleman, who have, with their usual condescension, been prevailed on to have a small number of copies printed from this very curious and invaluable MS. (Lond. 1770. 8vo.) which shows, beyond any other monument of antiquity now extant, the almost royal state and splendour of our ancient Barons, the number of their attendants, the regulations of their household, and the whole plan of their domestick œconomy.

Sect. I. p. 22.

“ITEM to be payd for Rewards of Players for
 “ Playes playd in Christynmas by stranegers in my
 “ house after xx d*. every Play by estimacion :
 “ sum xxxiiij. s. iiij d †.

Sect. V. p. 44.

“ My Lords Chapleyns in householde vj. viz. the
 “ Almonar, and if he be a MAKER OF INTERLUDYS,
 “ than he to have a servant to the intent for writ-
 “ tyng of the parts : and ells to have none. The
 “ Maister of gramar, &c.

Sect. XLIV. p. 340.

“ ITEM, my lorde usith and accustomith to gyf yerely
 “ when his lordship is at home to every Erles
 “ PLAYERS that comes to his lordship betwixt
 “ cristynmas and candilmas if he be his speciall
 “ lorde and friende and kinsman—xx s.

Ibid.

“ ITEM, my lorde usith and accustomyth to gyf yerely
 “ when his lordship is at home to every Lordis

* This was not so small a sum then as it may now appear ; for in another part of this MS. the price ordered to be given for a fat ox is but 13s. 4d. and for a lean one 8s.

† At this rate the number of Plays acted must have been twenty.

“ PLAYERS,

“PLAYERS, that comyth to his lordship betwixt
“cristynmas and candilmas—xs.

Sect. XLIV. p. 343.

“ITEM, my lorde usith and accustomyth to gyf yerely
“if his lordship kepe a chapell and be at home, them
“of his lordships chapell, if they doo play the Play
“of the NATIVITE uppon cristynmas day in the
“mornynge in my lordis chapell before his lord-
“ship—xxs.

Ibid. p. 345.

“ITEM, to them of his lordships chappell and
“other his lordships servaunts that doith play the
“Play before his lordship uppon SHROF-TEWSDAY
“at night yerely in reward—xs.

Ibid.

“ITEM, to them that playth the Play of
“RESURRECTION upon estur day in the morn-
“ynge in my lordis ‘chapell’ befor his lordshipe
“—xxs.

Ibid. p. 346.

“ITEM, My lorde usith and accustomyth yerely to gif
“hym which is ordeyned to be the MAISTER OF
“THE REVELS yerely in my lordis hous in-cristinmas
“for the overseynge and orderinge of his lordships
“Playes, Interludes and Dresinge that is plaid befor
“his lordship in his hous in the xij dayes of chris-
tinmas

“ tinmas and they to have a rewarde for that caus
 “ yerely—xxs.

Ibid. p. 351.

“ ITEM, Mylorde usith and accustomyth to gyf every
 “ of the Four Persons that his lordship admyted as
 “ his PLAYERS to come to his lordship yerely at
 “ crystynmas and at all other such tymes as his
 “ lordship shall comande them for playing of Playes
 “ and Interludes befor his lordship in his lordshipis
 “ hous for every of their fees for an hole yere”

I shall conclude this subject with the following miscellaneous remarks.

THERE is reason to think, that about the time of the Reformation great numbers of PLAYS were printed, though few of that age are now to be found; for part of Queen Elizabeth's INJUNCTIONS in 1559 are particularly directed to the suppressing of “ Many pamphlets, PLAYS, and Ballads: that no manner of
 “ Person shall enterprize to print any such, &c. but
 “ under certain restrictions.” Vid. sect. 5.

With regard to the Playhouse PRICES, an ancient satirical piece called the “ Black-Booke, Lond. 1604.” 4to. talks of “ the SIXPENNY roomes in play-houses:” and leaves a legacy to one whom he calls “ Arch-tobacco-Taker of England, in ordinaries, upon
 “ STAGES both common and private.”——And in the “ Belman's Night-Walks, by DECKER, 1616.” 4to. I find this—“ Pay thy TWO-PENCE to a Player, in this
 “ gallery

“gallery thou mayst sit by a harlot.” Yet small as these PRICES may now be thought, the Profession of an Actor appears to have been rather lucrative; this might be inferred from the passage quoted in page 140. (Not. d.) to which may be added the following extract from “GREENE’S Groatsworth of Wit, 1625.” 4to. (See Roberto’s Tale, Sign. D. 3. b.) “WHAT is your profession?”—“Truly, Sir, I am a PLAYER.” “A player! I took you rather for a Gentleman of great living; for if by outward Habit men should be censured, I tell you, you would be taken for a substantial man.” “So I am where I dwell. What though the world once went hard with me, when I was fayne to carry my playing-fardle a foot backe: *Tempora mutantur* for my very share in playing apparell will not be sold for TWO HUNDRED pounds. Nay more, I can serve to make a pretty speech, for I was a country Author, passing at a MORAL, &c.”

Lastly, with regard to the Decorations of the Stage, mean as they then were, Coryate thought them splendid compared to what he saw abroad: Speaking of the Theatre for Comedies at Venice, he says, “The house is very beggarly and base in comparison of our stately PLAY-HOUSES in England: neyther can their actors compare with ours for apparell, shews, and musicke. Here I observed certaine things that I never saw before: For I saw WOMEN ACT, a thing that I never saw before, though I have heard that it hath been sometimes used in London; and

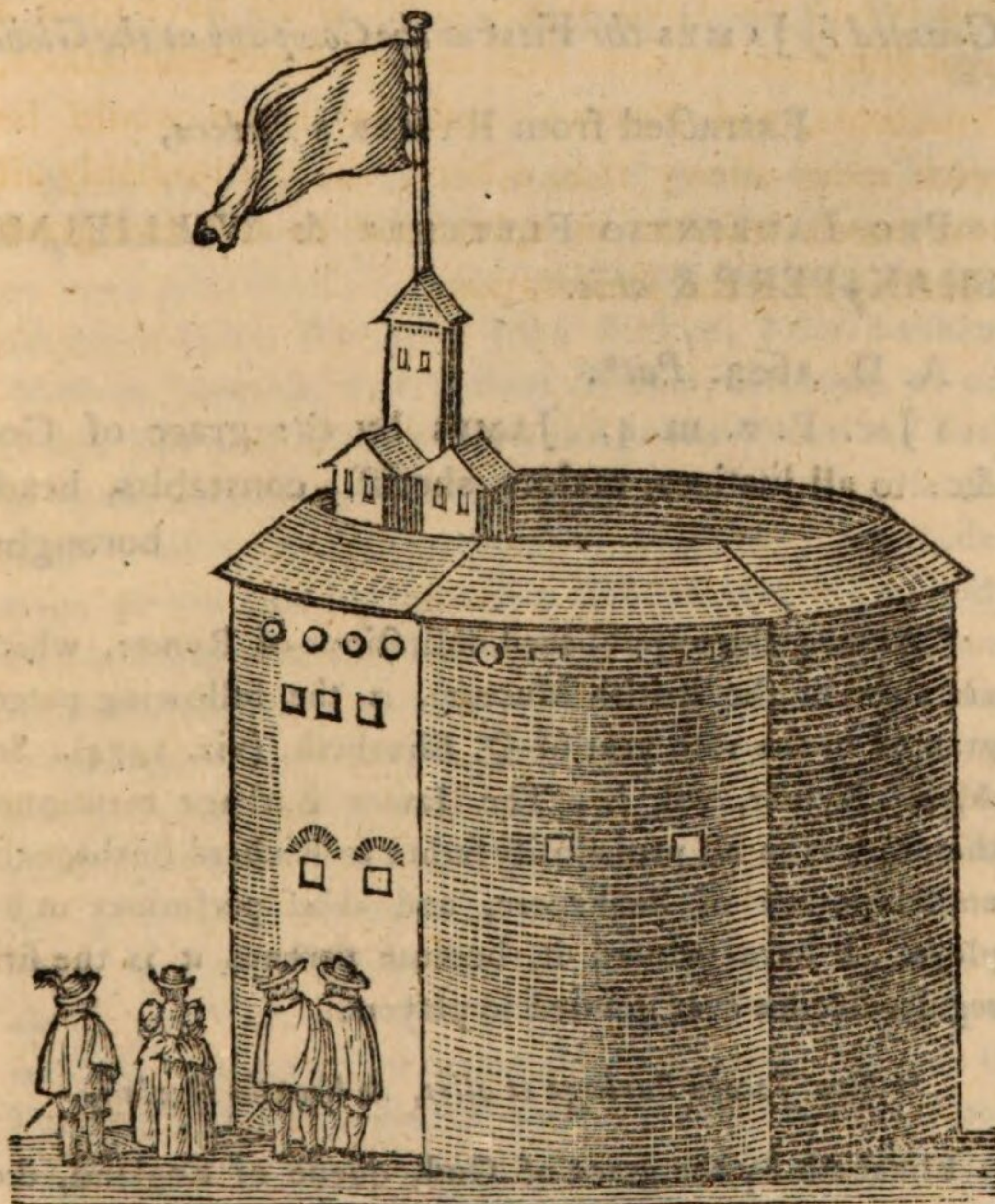
“ they performed it with as good a grace, action,
“ gesture, and whatsoever convenient for a Player,
“ as ever I saw any masculine Actor.” Coryate’s
Crudities, 4to. 1611. p. 247.

It ought however to be observed, that amid such a
multitude of PLAY-HOUSES as subsisted in the Metro-
polis before the Civil Wars, there must have been a
great difference between their several Accommodations,
Ornaments, and Prices ; and that some would be
much more shewy than others, though probably all
were much inferior in splendour to the two great
Theatres after the Restoration.

The

The GLOBE on the BANCKE SIDE, where
SHAKSPERE acted.

*From the long Antwerp View of London in the
PEPYSIAN LIBRARY.*



With the drawing from which this Cut was made,
I was favoured by the Reverend Mr. Henley.

STEEVENS.

T H E
L I C E N C E for *A C T I N G*,

Granted by JAMES the First to the Company at the Globe,

Extracted from RYMER's Fædera,

PRO LAURENTIO FLETCHER & WILLIELMO
SHAKSPERE & *aliis*.

A. D. 1603. *Pat**.

1 Jac. P. 2. m. 4. JAMES by the grace of God
&c. to all justices, maiors, sheriffs, constablss, head-
boroughs,

* Among the unpublished collections of Rymer, which are now in the British Museum, is the following patent granted in the 16th year of Q. Elizabeth, (viz. 1574). See MSS. Rymer, vol. i. The James Burbage mentioned therein was in all probability father to Richard Burbage the contemporary of Shakspeare, and chief performer in his plays. I have printed it, because perhaps it is the first regular licence ever granted to players.

“ Pro Jacobo Burbage et aliis, de licentia speciali.

Elizabeth by the grace of God, quene of England, &c.
To all justices, mayors, sheriffes, baylyffes, head con-
stables, under constables, and all other oure officers and
mynisters, gretinge,

Kuow

boroughs, and other our officers and loving subjects, greeting. Know you that wee, of our special grace, certaine knowledge and meer motion, have licensed and authorised, and by these presentes doe licence and authorize theise our servaunts Laurence Fletcher, *William Shakspeare*, Richard Burbage, Augustine Phillipes, John Heminge, Henrie Condell, William Sly,

Know ye, that we of our especiall grace, certen knowledge, and mere motion, have lycensed and auctorised, and by these presents do lycence and auctorise oure lovinge subjectes James Burbage, John Perkyn, John Lanham, William Johnson, and Robert Wilson, servaunts to our trustie and well beloved cosen and counseyllour the Earle of Leycester, to use, exercyse and occupie the arte and facultye of playenge commedies, tragedies, enterludes, stage playes, and suche other like as they have alredie used and studied, or hereafter shall use and studie, as well for the recreation of oure lovinge subjectes as for oure solace and pleasure when we shall thinke good to see them, as also to use and occupie all suche instruments as they have alredie practised or hereafter shall practise for and duringe our pleasure; and the said commedies, tragedies, enterludes, and stage-plaies, together with their musicke, to shew, publishe, exercise and occupie to their best commoditie, during all the terme aforesaid, as well within the liberties and freedoms of anye our cities, townes, boroughs, &c. whatsoever, as without the same thoroughoute oure realme of England. Wyllinge and commaundings yowe and every of you as ye tender oure pleasure to permitt and suffer them herein withoute anye lettes, hynderaunce

Sly, Robert Armin, Richard Cowly, and the rest of their associates, freely to use and exercise the arte and faculty of playing comedies, tragedies, histories, interludes, morals, pastorals, stage-plaies, and such like others as theie have already studied or hereafter shall use or studie, as well for the recreation of our lovinge subjects, as well as for our solace and pleasure, when we shall thincke good to see them, during our pleasure: and the said comedies, tragedies, histories, enterludes, morals, pastorals, stage-plaies, and such like, to shew and exercise publiquely to their best commoditie, when the infection of the plague shall decrease, as well within their nowe usuall house called the Globe, within our county of Surrey, as also within anie toun halls or moute halls, or other

hynderaunce or molestation duringe the terme aforesaid, any acte, statute, or proclamation or commaundement heretofore made or hereafter to be made notwithstandinge; provyded that the saide commedies, tragedies, enterludes and stage-playes be by the master of our revells for the tyme beyinge before sene and allowed; and that the same be not published or shewen in the tyme of common prayer or in the tyme of greate and common plague in our saide citye of London.

In wytness whereof, &c.

Wytness ourselfe at Westminster the 10th daye of Maye.

Per breve de privato sigillo."

Mr. Dodsley in the preface to his collection of old plays 1744, p. 21. says, that the first company of players we have any account of in history, are the children of Paul's in 1578. STEEVENS.

convenient

convenient places within the liberties and freedom of any other citie, universitie, toun, or boroughe whatsoever within our said realmes and dominions. Willing and commanding you, and everie of you, as you tender our pleasure, not onlie to permit and suffer them herein, without anie your letts, hindrances, or molestations, during our said pleasure, but also to be aiding or assistinge to them if any wrong be to them offered, and to allow them such former curtesies as hath bene given to men of their place and quallitie; and also what further favour you shall shew to theise our servants for our sake, we shall take kindlie at your handes.

In witness whereof, &c.

Witness our selfe at Westminster, the nynteenth daye of Maye.

Per Breve de Privato Sigillo.

NAMES

NAMES of the original ACTORS in the Plays of
SHAKSPERE : From the Folio, 1623.

William Shakspeare.

Richard Burbage.

John Heminge.

Augustine Phillips.

William Kempe.

Thomas Poope.

George Bryan.

Henrie Condell.

William Sly.

Richard Cowly.

John Lowine.

Samuel Crosse.

Alexander Cooke.

Samuel Gilburne.

Robert Armin.*

William Ostler.

Nathan Field†.

John Underwood.

Nicholas Tooley.

William Ecclestone.

Joseph Taylor.

Robert Benfield.

Robert Goughe.

Richard Robinson.

John Shanke.

John Rice.

It may appear singular that the name of the celebrated *Alleyn* (founder of Dulwich-College) should not

* Author of the *Two Maids of Moreclack*, Com. 1609.

† Author of *Amends for Ladies*, Com. 1639, and *Woman is a Weathercock*, Com. 1612. He also assisted Massinger in the *Fatal Dowry*. STEEVENS.

That Nathaniel Field was the author of these plays I am by no means satisfied. I think him to have been a different person. See *Dodsley's Collection of old Plays*, vol. XII. p. 350. last edition. REED.

occur

occur in this list of performers. But Alleyn was master of the *Fortune* playhouse, which he is said either to have built or rebuilt, and therefore might have no connection with other theatres where the plays of Shakspeare were exhibited. We learn, however, from Langbaine, that he had been "an ornament to Black-Friers." *John Wilson*, who appears to have acted in our author's *Much Ado about Nothing*, is likewise excluded from this catalogue; though Meres, in the Second Part of his *Wit's Commonwealth*, 1598, praising several who were "famous for extemporall verse," says, "Of our *Tarlton*, doctor Case, that learned physitian, thus speaketh in the seventh book and seventeenth chapter of his *Politikes*; *Aristoteles suum Theodoretum laudavit, quendam peritum tragædiarum actorem*; *Cicero suum Roscium*; *nos Angli Tarletonum, in cujus voce & vultu omnes jocosæ affectus, in cujus cerebro capite lepidæ facetiæ habitant*. And so is our wittie WILSON, who, for learning and extemporall witte in this facultie, is without compare or compeere, &c." STEEVENS.

A LIST OF SUCH
ANCIENT EDITIONS

O F

SHAKSPERE'S PLAYS,

As have hitherto been met with by his different Editors.

*Those marked with Asterisks are in no former Tables; and
those which are marked with † I have never seen.*

- I. 1. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, William Shakspeare, 1600, Thomas Fisher.
2. *Do.* W. Shakspeare, 1600, James Roberts.
- II. 1. *Merry Wives of Windsor*, William Shakspeare, 1602, T. C. for Aurthur Johnson.
2. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1619, for Do.
3. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1630. T. H. for R. Meighen.
- III. *Much Ado about Nothing*, William Shakspeare, 1600. V. S. for Andrew Wise and William Aspley.

IV.

- IV. 1. *Merchant of Venice*, William Shakspeare, 1600, J. R. for Thomas Heyes.
 2. *Do.* W. Shakspeare, 1600. J. Roberts.
 3. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1637, M. P. for Laurence Hayes.
 4. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1652, for William Leake.
- V. 1. *Love's Labour's Lost*, William Shakspeare, 1598, W. W. for Cuthbert Burbey.
 2. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1631, W. S. for John Smethwicke.
- VI. 1. *Taming of the Shrew*, 1607, V. S. for Nicholas Ling.
 2. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1631, W. S. for John Smethwicke.
- VII. * 1. *King Lear*, William Shakspeare, 1608, for Nathaniel Butter.
 2. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1608, for Do.
 3. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1655, Jane Bell.
- VIII. † 1. *King John*, 2 Parts, 1591, for Sampson Clarke.
 2. *Do.* W. Sh. 1611. Valentine Simmes, for John Helme.
 3. *Do.* W. Shakspeare, 1622. Aug. Matthewes, for Thomas Dewe.

† These three are only copies of the spurious plays.

- IX. 1. *Richard II.* 1597, Valentine Simmes, for Andrew Wise.
 2. *Richard II.* William Shakspeare, 1598, Valentine Simmes, for Andrew Wise.
 3. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1608, W. W. for Matthew Law.
 4. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1615, for Matthew Law.
 5. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1634, John Norton.
- X. * 1. *Henry IV. First Part*, 1598, P. S. for Andrew Wise.
 2. *Do.* W. Shakspeare, 1599, S. S. for *Do.*
 † 3. *Do.* 1604.
 * 4. *Do.* 1608, for Matthew Law.
 5. *Do.* W. Shakspeare, 1614, W. W. for *Do.*
 6. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1622, T. P. sold by *Do.*
 * 7. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1632, John Norton, sold by William Sheares.
 8. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1639, John Norton, sold by Hugh Perry.
- XI. 1. *Henry IV. Second Part*, William Shakspeare, 1600, V. S. for Andrew Wise and William Aspley.
 2. *Do.* 1600. *Do.*

XII.

XII. *1. *Henry V.* 1600, Tho. Creede, for T. Millington and John Busby.

2. *Do.* 1602, Thomas Creede, for Thomas Pavier.

3. *Do.* 1608, for T. P.

XIII. XIV. 1. *Henry VI.* William Shakspeare, 1600, Valentine Simmes, for Thomas Millington.

2. *Do.* William Shakspeare, W. W. for T. Millington, 1600.

3. *Do.* William Shakspeare, T. P.

XV. †1. *Richard III.* 1597, Valentine Simmes, for Andrew Wise.

2. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1598, Thomas Creede, for Do.

3. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1602, Thomas Creede, for Do.

4. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1612, Thomas Creede, sold by Matthew Law.

5. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1622, Thomas Purfoot, sold by Do.

6. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1629, John Norton, sold by Do.

7. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1634, J. Norton.

XVI. *Titus Andronicus*, 1611, for Edward White.

XVII. 1. *Troilus and Cressida*, William Shakspeare, 1609, G. Eld, for R. Bonian and H. Whalley, with a Preface.

2. *Do.* 1609, for *Do.*

3. *Do.* no Date, *Do.*

XVIII.* 1. *Romeo and Juliet*, 1597, John Danter.

2. *Do.* 1599, T. Creede, for Cuth. Burby.

3. *Do.* 1609, for John Smethwicke.

4. *Do.* William Shakspeare, no Date, John Smethwicke.

5. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1637, R. Young, for *Do.*

XIX. * 1. *Hamlet*, William Shakspeare, J. R. for N. L. 1604.

2. *Do.* W. Shakspeare, 1605, J. R. for N. L.

3. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1611, for John Smethwicke.

4. *Do.* W. Shakspeare, no Date, W. S. for *Do.*

5. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1637, R. Young, for *Do.*

6. *Do.* R. Bentley, 1695.

XX. † 1. *Othello*, William Shakspeare, no Date, T. Walkely.

2. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1622. N. O. for Thomas Walkely.

3. *Do.* William Shakspeare, 1630, A. M. for Richard Hawkins.

4. *Do.* W. Shakspeare, 1655, for W. Leake.

☞ Of all the remaining plays, the most authentick edition is the folio 1623; yet that of 1632 is not without value; for though it be in some places more incorrectly printed than the preceding one, it has likewise the advantage of various readings, which are not merely such as reiteration of copies will naturally produce. The curious examiner of Shakspeare's text, who possesses the first of these, ought not to be unfurnished with the second. As to the third and fourth impressions (which include the seven rejected plays) they are little better than waste paper, for they differ only from the preceding ones by a larger accumulation of errors. I had inadvertently given a similar character of the folio 1632; but take this opportunity of confessing a mistake into which I was led by too implicit a reliance on the assertions of others.

FOLIO EDITIONS.

I. Mr. WILLIAM SHAKSPERE'S *Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies*. Published according to the true original Copies. 1623. Fol. Isaac Jaggard and Edward Blount.

II. Do. 1632. Fol. Tho. Cotes, for Rob. Allot.

III. Do. 1664. Fol. for P. C.

IV. Do. 1685. Fol. for H. Herringman, E. Brewster, and R. Bentley.

MODERN EDITIONS.

- Octavo, Rowe's, London, 1709, 7 Vols.
 Quarto, Pope's, Ditto, 1723, 6 Do.
 Duodecimo, Pope's, Ditto, 1728, 10 Do.
 Octavo, Theobald's Ditto, 1733, 7 Do.
 Duodecimo, Theobald's Ditto, 1740, 8 Do.
 Quarto, Hanmer's, Oxford, 1744, 6 Do.
 Octavo, Warburton's, London, 1747, 8 Do.
 Ditto, Johnson's, ditto, 1765, 8 Do.
 Ditto, Steevens's, ditto, 1766, 4 Do.
 Crown 8vo. Capell's, 1768, 10 Do.
 Quarto, Hanmer's, Oxford, 1771, 6 Do.
 Octavo, Johnson and Steevens's, London, 1773,
 10 Do.
 Do. second Edition, ditto, 1778, 10 Do.
 Do. third Edition, ditto, by Reed, 1786, 10 Do.
 Duodecimo Edition, *adapted to the use of the THEATRES,
 and regulated from the Prompt Books, by per-
 mission of the managers ; printed for J. BELL,
 the publisher of the present Edition, 1773, 9 vols.
 of which Edition, in 1773, 8000 copies were
 printed, and have been sold, exclusive of the fol-
 lowing statement.*

The reader may not be displeased to know the exact sums paid to the different Editors of Shakspeare. The following account is taken from the books of the late Mr. Tonson.

To

To Mr. Rowe	————	£ 36	10	0
Mr. Hughes*	————	28	7	0
Mr. Pope	————	217	12	0
Mr. Fenton †	————	30	12	0
Mr. Gay ‡	————	35	19	6
Mr. Whatley §	————	12	0	0
Mr. Theobald	————	652	10	0
Mr. Warburton	————	560	0	0
Dr. Johnson	————			
Mr. Capell	————	300	0	0

Of these editions some have passed several times through the press ; but only such as vary from each other are here enumerated.

To this list might be added, several spurious and mutilated impressions ; but as they appear to have been executed without the smallest degree of skill, either in the manners or language of the time of Shakspeare, and as the names of their respective editors are prudently concealed, it were useless to commemorate the number of their volumes, or the distinct date of each publication.

Some of our legitimate editions will afford a sufficient specimen of the fluctuation of price in books.—An ancient quarto was sold for six-pence ; and the

* For correcting the press and making an index to Mr. Rowe's 12mo. edition.

† For assistance to Mr. Pope in correcting the press.

‡ For the same services.

§ For correcting the sheets of Pope's 12mo.

|| Of Mr. Theobald's edition no less than 11,360 have been printed.

folios

folios 1623 and 1632, when first printed, could not have been rated higher than at ten shillings each.— Very lately, one, and two guineas, have been paid for a quarto; the first folio is usually valued at seven or eight: but what price may be expected for it hereafter, is not very easy to be determined, the conscience of Mr. Fox, Bookseller, Holborn, having lately permitted him to ask no less than *two guineas* for *two leaves* out of a mutilated copy of that impression, though he had several, almost equally defective, in his shop. The second folio is commonly rated at two or three guineas.

At the late Mr. Jacob Tonson's sale, in the year 1767, one hundred and forty copies of Mr. Pope's edition of Shakspeare, in six volumes quarto (for which the subscribers paid six guineas), were disposed of among the booksellers at sixteen shillings per set. Seven hundred and fifty of this edition were printed.

At the same sale, the remainder of Dr. Warburton's edition, in eight volumes 8vo. printed in 1747 (of which the original price was two pounds eight shillings, and the number printed 1000) was sold off: viz. 178 copies, at eighteen shillings each.

On the contrary, Sir Thomas Hanmer's edition, printed at Oxford in 1744, which was first sold for three guineas, had arisen to nine or ten, before it was reprinted.

It appears, however, from the foregoing catalogue (when all reiterations of legitimate edition are taken into the account, together with five spurious ones
printed

printed in Ireland, one in Scotland, one at Birmingham, and four in London, making in the whole thirty-five impressions) that not less than 35,000 copies of our author's works have been dispersed, exclusive of the quartos, single plays, and such as have been altered for the stage. Of the latter, as exact a list as I have been able to form, with the assistance of Mr. Reed, of Staple-Inn (than whom no man is more conversant with English publications both ancient and modern, or more willing to assist the literary undertaking of others), will be found in the course of the following pages,

OLD EDITIONS

O F

SHAKSPERE'S POEMS.

- I. SHAKSPERE'S Poems, 1609, 4to.
- II. Do. 1640. 8vo. Tho. Cotes, sold by John Benson.
- III. Passionate Pilgrim, Poems by Do. 1599, 8vo. small, for W. Jaggard, sold by W. Leake.
- IV. Rape of Lucrece, a Poem, 1594, 4to. Richard Field, for John Harrison.
- V. Do. 1598. 8vo. P. S. for Do.
- VI. Do. 1607, 8vo. N. O. for Do.
- VII. Do. 12mo. (Newly revised) T. S. for Roger Jackson, 1616.

VIII.

VIII. Venus and Adonis, a Poem, 1620, 8vo. for J. P. *

IX. Do. 12mo. by J. H. sold by Francis Coules, 1636.

X. The Rape of Lucrece, whereunto is annexed the Banishment of Tarquin, by John Quarles, 12mo. 1665.

MODERN EDITIONS.

SHAKSPERE'S Poems, 8vo. for Bernard Lintot, no date.

————— 8vo. by Gildon, 1710.

————— 4to. and 12mo. by Sewell, 1728.

PLAYS ASCRIBED TO SHAKSPERE,

*Either by the Editors of the two later Folios, or by the
Compilers of ancient Catalogues.*

1. Arraignment of Paris, 1584 †. Henry Marsh.
2. Birth of Merlin, 1662, Tho. Johnson, for Francis Kirkman and Henry Marsh.
3. Edward III. ‡ 1596, for Cuthbert Burby. 2. 1599, Simon Stafford, for Do.

* See the following Extract of Entries in the books of the Stationers' Company.

† It appears from an epistle prefixed to Greene's *Arcadia*, that the *Arraignment of Paris* was written by George Peele, the author of *King David and Fair Bethsabe*, &c. 1599.

‡ See the following Extracts from the books at Stationers' Hall.

4. Fair

4. Fair Em *, 1631, for John Wright.

5. Locrine, 1595 †, Thomas Creede.

6. London Prodigal, 1605.

7. Merry

* *Fair Em.*] In Mr. Garrick's Collection, is a volume, formerly belonging to King Charles I. which is lettered on the back, SHAKSPERE, vol. I. This vol. consists of *Fair Em*, *The Merry Devil*, &c. *Mucedorus*, &c. There is no authority for ascribing *Fair Em* to our author.

† The title-page of this play offers no sufficient evidence to convict Shakspeare of having been its author, as it only says, "newly set foorth, overseene and corrected by W. S." Supposing W. S. to have been meant for W. Shakspeare; as the manager of a theatre, or as a friend to the author, he might have condescended to correct what his genius could not have stooped to write. This piece likewise exhibits several antiquated and affected words never used by Shakspeare; as *lore* for lesson, *stoure* for tumult, *virent* for green, and *occision* for slaughter; besides *equalize*, *rosiall*, *mavortial*, *Eos*, *Fames* (a personification of *Hunger*), *Puriphlegeton*, *macerate*, *venerean*, *suspires* (for *sighs* subst.) *frumps*, *arcane* for secret, *feer* for wife, *exequies* for obsequies, &c. It contains also a Spanish quotation and many Latin verses; and is full of those *inexplicable dumb shews* which Shakspeare has ridiculed in *Hamlet*.

Whoever was the author of *Locrine*, it could not have been printed till after the 17th of November 1595, when Queen Elizabeth entered into the 38th year of her reign, as at the conclusion of it is the following prayer for her Majesty:

"So let us pray for that *renowned Maid*,

"That *eight and thirty* years the sceptre sway'd, &c.

The

7. Merry Devil of Edmonton *, 1608, Henry Ballard for Arthur Johnson. 2. 1617, G. Eld. for Do. 3. 1626, A. M. for Francis Falkner. 4. 1631, T. P. for Do. 5. 1655, for W. Gilbertson.

8. Mucedorus †, 1598, for William Jones. 2. 1610. for Do. 3. 1615, N. O. for Do. 4. 1639, for John Wright. 5. No Date, for Francis Coles. 6. 1668, E. O. for Do.

9. Pericles ‡, 1609, for Henry Gosson. 2. 1619, for T. P. 3. 1630, J. N. for R. B. 4. 1635, Thomas Cotes.

10. Puritan §, 1600, and 1607, G. Eld.

11. Sir John Oldcastle, 1600, for T. P.

12. Thomas Lord Cromwell, 1613, Thomas Snodham.

The story of this play is taken from Gower, or in part from the ancient romance of *Kynge Appolyn of Thyre*, which was translated from the French by Robert Copland, who had worked under Caxton. I have a copy of it printed by Wynkyn de Wode, in 1510.

* See the following Extracts from the books at Stationers' Hall.

† See, &c.

‡ Ben Johnson, in an ode published at the end of his *New Inn*, has the following sarcasm on this piece :

“ No doubt some mouldy tale

“ Like *Pericles*, and stale

“ As the shrieves crusts, &c.”——

§ See, &c.

13. Two Noble Kinsmen, 1634, Tho. Cotes, for John Waterson.

14. Yorkshire Tragedy, 1608*, R. B. for T. Pavyer. Do. 1619, for T. P.

LIST OF PLAYS ALTERED FROM SHAKSPERE.

INVENIES ETIAM DISJECTI MEMBRA POETAE.

TEMPEST.

The Tempest, or The Enchanted Island. A Comedy, acted in Dorset-Garden. By Sir. W. Davenant and Dryden. 4to. 1669.

The Tempest, made into an Opera, by Shadwell, in 1673. See Downes, p. 34.

The Tempest, an Opera taken from Shakspeare. As it is performed at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. By Mr. Garrick. 8vo. 1756.

TWO GENTLEMEN of VERONA.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona. A Comedy written by Shakspeare, with alterations and additions, as it is performed at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. By Mr. Victor. 8vo. 1763.

MERRY WIVES of WINDSOR.

The Comical Gallant, or The Amours of Sir John Falstaff.* A Comedy, as it is acted at the Theatre-

* See, &c.

Y

Royal

Royal in Drury-Lane, by his Majesty's Servants. By Mr. Dennis. 4to. 1702.

MEASURE for MEASURE.

The Law against Lovers, by Sir William Davenant. Fol. 1673.

Measure for Measure, or *Beauty the best Advocate*. As it is acted at the Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields; written originally by Mr. Shakspeare, and now very much altered: with additions of several Entertainments of Musick. By Mr. Gildon. 4to. 1700.

COMEDY of ERRORS.

An alteration of this play, under the title of *Every Body mistaken*, was acted at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields 1716, but was never printed.

The Comedy of Errors, altered by Mr. Hull, was acted at Covent-Garden 1779, is now printed.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

The Law against Lovers. By Sir W. Davenant. Fol. 1673.

The Universal Passion. A Comedy, as it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, by his Majesty's Servants. By James Miller. 8vo. 1737.

LOVE's LABOUR's LOST.

The Students, a Comedy altered from Shakspeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*, and adapted to the stage. 8vo. 1762.

MIDSUMMER

MIDSUMMER NIGHT's DREAM.

The Humours of Bottom the Weaver, by Robert Cox. 4to.

The Fairy Queen, an Opera, represented at the Queen's Theatre by their Majesty's Servants. 4to. 1692.

Pyramus and Thisbe, a Comick Masque, by Richard Leveridge, performed at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. 8vo. 1716.

Pyramus and Thisbe, a Mock Opera, written by Shakspeare. Set to musick by Mr. Lampe. Performed at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden. 8vo. 1745.

The Fairies, an Opera, taken from a *Midsummer Night's Dream*, written by Shakspeare, as it is performed at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. By Mr. Garrick. 8vo. 1755.

A Midsummer Night's Dream, written by Shakspeare, with Alterations and Additions, and several new Songs. As it is performed at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. By Mr. Colman. 8vo. 1763.

A Fairy Tale, in two acts, taken from Shakspeare. As it is performed at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. By the same. 8vo. 1763.

MERCHANT of VENICE.

The Jew of Venice, a Comedy. As it is acted at the Theatre in Little Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, by his Majesty's Servants By George Granville, Esq. afterwards Lord Lansdowne. 4to. 1701.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

Love in a Forest, a Comedy. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, by his Majesty's Servants. By C. Johnson. 8vo. 1723.

The Modern Receipt, or *A Cure for Love*. A Comedy altered from Shakspeare. The Dedication is signed J. C. 12mo. 1739.

TAMING of the SHREW.

Sawny the Scott, or *The Taming of the Shrew*; a Comedy, as it is now acted at the Theatre-Royal, and never before printed. By John Lacy. 4to. 1698.

The Cobler of Preston, a Farce, as it is acted at the New Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. By Christopher Bullock. 12mo. 1716.

The Cobler of Preston, as it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, by his Majesty's Servants. By C. Johnson. 8vo. 1716.

A Cure for a Scold, a Ballad Opera, by James Worsdale, 8vo. Taken from *The Taming of a Shrew*. 8vo. 1736.

Catharine and Petruchio. By Mr. Garrick. 8vo. 1756.

ALL's WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

All's Well that Ends Well. A Comedy, altered by Mr. Pilon, and reduced to three acts; performed at the Haymarket-Theatre 1785, but not printed.

WINTER's

WINTER'S TALE.

The Winter's Tale, a Play altered from Shakspeare.
By Charles Marsh. 8vo. 1756.

Florizel and Perdita, by Mr. Garrick. 8vo. 1758.

Sheepshearing, or *Florizel and Perdita*, by ——— Dub-
lin. 12mo. 1767.

The Sheepshearing, a Dramatick Pastoral. In three
acts. Taken from Shakspeare. As it is performed at
the Theatre-Royal in the Haymarket. 8vo. 1777.

MACBETH.

Macbeth, a Tragedy, with all the Alterations,
Amendments, Additions, and new Songs, as it is now
acted at the Duke's Theatre. By Sir William Dave-
nant. 4to. 1674.

The Historical Tragedy of *Macbeth* (written origi-
nally by Shakspeare), newly adapted to the stage, with
Alterations, as performed at the Theatre in Edin-
burgh. 8vo. 1753.

KING JOHN.

Papal Tyranny in the Reign of King John, a Tragedy,
as it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden,
by his Majesty's Servants. By Colley Cibber. 8vo.
1744.

KING RICHARD II.

The History of Richard the Second. Acted at the
Theatre-Royal under the title of *The Sicilian Usurper*:
with a prefatory Epistle in vindication of the Author,

occasioned by the prohibition of his play on the stage.
By N. Tate. 4to. 1681.

The Tragedy of *King Richard II.* altered from Shakspeare. By Lewis Theobald. 8vo. 1720.

King Richard II. a Tragedy, altered from Shakspeare, and the style imitated. By James Goodhall. Printed at Manchester. 8vo. 1772.

KING HENRY IV. Part I.

King Henry IV. with the Humours of Sir John Falstaff, a Tragi-Comedy, as it is acted at the Theatre in Little Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, by his Majesty's Servants. Revived with Alterations. By Mr. Betterton. 4to. 1700.

King Henry IV. Part II.

The Sequel of Henry IV. with the Humours of Sir John Falstaff and Justice Shallow; as it is acted by his Majesty's Company of Comedians at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. Altered from Shakspeare by the late Mr. Betterton. 8vo. No Date.

KING HENRY VI. Three Parts.

Henry the Sixth, the First Part, with the Murder of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester. As it was acted at the Duke's Theatre. By John Crowne. 4to. 1681.

Henry the Sixth, the Second Part, or the Misery of Civil War. As it was acted at the Duke's Theatre. By John Crowne. 4to. 1681.

Humfrey Duke of Gloucester, a Tragedy, as it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, by his Majesty's Servants.

Servants. [A few speeches and lines *only* borrowed from Shakspeare.] By Ambrose Philips.

An Historical Tragedy of the Civil Wars in the Reign of King Henry VI. (being a Sequel to the Tragedy of Humfrey Duke of Gloucester, and an Introduction to the Tragical History of King Richard III.) altered from Shakspeare in the year 1720. By Theo. Cibber. 8vo. No date.

KING RICHARD III.

The Tragical History of King Richard III. altered from Shakspeare. By Colley Cibber. 4to. 1700.

CORIOLANUS.

The Ingratitude of a Commonwealth, or The Fall of Caius Martius Coriolanus. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal. By Nahum Tate. 4to. 1682.

The Invader of his Country, or The Fatal Resentment. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, by his Majesty's Servants. By John Dennis. 8vo. 1720.

Coriolanus, or The Roman Matron, a Tragedy, taken from Shakspeare and Thomson. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden: to which is added the Order of the Ovation. By Thomas Sheridan. 8vo. 1755.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

The Tragedy of Julius Cæsar, with the Death of Brutus and Cassius: written originally by Shakspeare, and since altered by Sir William D'Avenant and John Dryden, Poets Laureat; as it is now acted by his Majesty's

jesty's Company of Comedians at the Theatre-Royal. To which is prefixed the Life of Julius Cæsar, abstracted from Plutarch and Suetonius. 12mo. 1719.

The Tragedy of *Julius Cæsar*, altered, with a Prologue and Chorus. 4to. 1722.

The Tragedy of *Marcus Brutus*, with the Prologue and the two last Chorusses. 4to. 1722. Both by John Sheffield Duke of Buckingham.

ANTONY and CLEOPATRA.

Antony and Cleopatra, an Historical Play, written by William Shakspeare, fitted for the stage by abridging only; and now acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane by his Majesty's Servants. By Edward Capell. 12mo. 1758.

TIMON of ATHENS.

The History of *Timon of Athens, the Man-hater*. As it is acted at the Duke's Theatre, made into a Play, by Tho. Shadwell. 4to. 1678.

Timon of Athens. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal on Richmond-Green. Altered from Shakspeare and Shadwell. By James Love. 8vo. 1768.

Timon of Athens, altered from Shakspeare, a Tragedy, as it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. By Mr. Cumberland. 8vo. 1771.

TITUS ANDRONICUS.

Titus Andronicus, or The Rape of Lavinia. Acted at the Theatre-Royal. A Tragedy, altered from Mr. Shakspeare's Works. By Edward Ravenscroft. 4to. 1687.

TROILUS

TROILUS and CRESSIDA.

Troilus and Cressida, or Truth Found too Late. A Tragedy, as it is acted at the Duke's Theatre. By John Dryden. 4to. 1679.

CYMBELINE.

The Injured Princess, or The Fatal Wager. As it was acted at the Theatre-Royal, by his Majesty's Servants. By Tho. Durfey. 4to. 1682.

Cymbeline, King of Great-Britain, a Tragedy written by Shakspeare, with some Alterations. By Charles Marsh. 8vo. 1755.

Cymbeline, a Tragedy, altered from Shakspeare. As it is performed at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden, by W. Hawkins. 8vo. 1759.

Cymbeline, altered by Mr. Garrick in the same year.

KING LEAR.

The History of King Lear, acted at the Duke's Theatre. Revived with Alterations. By Nahum Tate. 4to. 1681.

The History of King Lear, as it is performed at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden. By George Colman. 8vo. 1768.

ROMEO and JULIET.

Romeo and Juliet, altered into a Tragi-Comedy, by James Howard, Esquire. See Downes, p. 22.

Caius Marius, by Thomas Otway.

Romeo and Juliet, a Tragedy revised and altered from Shakspeare. By Theo. Cibber. 8vo. No date.

Romeo

Romeo and Juliet, altered by Mr. Garrick. 12mo.

From the Preface to the Republication of Marsh's *Cymbeline*, in 1762, it appears that he had likewise made an alteration of *Romeo and Juliet*.

HAMLET.

Hamlet, altered by Mr. Garrick, acted at Drury-Lane, 1774, but not printed.

LIST of DETACHED PIECES of CRITICISM
on SHAKSPERE, his Editors, &c.

A SHORT View of Tragedy. Its original Excellency and Corruption. With some Reflections on Shakspeare and other Practitioners for the Stage. By Mr. Rymer, Servant to their Majesties. 8vo. 1693.

Remarks on the Plays of Shakspeare. By C. Gildon, 8vo. Printed at the end of the seventh volume of Rowe's edition. 1710.

An Essay on the Genius and Writings of Shakspeare, with some Letters of Criticism to the Spectator. By Mr. Dennis. 8vo. 1712.

Shakspeare restored: or, a Specimen of the many Errors as well committed as unamended, by Mr. Pope, in his late Edition of this Poet. Designed not only to correct the said Edition, but to restore the true Reading of Shakspeare in all the Editions ever yet published. By Mr. Theobald. 4to. 1726.

An Answer to Mr. Pope's Preface to Shakspeare in a letter to a friend, being a Vindication of the old Actors who were the publishers and performers of that Author's Plays. Whereby the Errors of their Edition are further accounted for, and some Me-
 4 moirs

moirs of Shakspeare and the Stage History of his Time are inserted, which were never before collected and published. By a strolling Player [John Roberts]. 8vo. 1729.

Some Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, written by William Shakspeare. Printed for W. Wilkins in Lombard-Street. 8vo. 1736.

Explanatory and Critical Notes on divers Passages of Shakspeare's Plays, by Francis Peck. Printed with his "New Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Mr. John Milton." 4to. 1740.

An Essay towards fixing the true Standards of Wit and Humour, Raillery, Satire, and Ridicule: to which is added, an Analysis of the Characters of an Humourist, Sir John Falstaff, Sir Roger de Coverley, and Don Quixote. [By Corbyn Morris.] 8vo. 1744.

Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth: with Remarks on Sir Thomas Hanmer's Edition of Shakspeare. To which is affixed—Proposals for a new Edition of Shakspeare, with a Specimen. [By Dr. Samuel Johnson.] 12mo. 1745.

A Word or two of Advice to William Warburton, a Dealer in many words. By a Friend [Dr. Grey]. With an Appendix containing a taste of William's spirit of railing. 8vo. 1746.

Critical Observations on Shakspeare: by John Upton, Prebendary of Rochester. First Edition, 8vo. 1746. Second Edition, 1748.

Essay on English Tragedy, with Remarks on the Abbé Le Blanc's Observations on the English Stage. By William Guthrie, Esq. 8vo. No date. [1747.]

An

An Inquiry into the Learning of Shakspeare, with Remarks on several Passages of his Plays. In a Conversation between Eugenius and Neander. By Peter Whalley, A. B. Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford. 8vo. 1748.

An Answer to certain Passages in Mr. W——'s Preface to his Edition of Shakspeare, together with some Remarks on the many Errors and false Criticisms in the Work itself. 8vo. 1748.

Remarks upon a late Edition of Shakspeare: with a long String of Emendations borrowed by the celebrated Editor from the Oxford Edition without acknowledgment. To which is prefixed a Defence of the late Sir Thomas Hanmer, Bart. Addressed to the Rev. Mr. Warburton, Preacher of Lincoln's-Inn, &c. 8vo. No date.

An Attempte to rescue that aunciente English Poet and Play-wrighte, Maister Williame Shakspeare, from the many Errours faulsely charged on him by certaine new-fangled Wittes; and to let him speak for himself, as right well he wotteth, when freedde from the many careless mistakings of the heedless first Imprinters of his Workes. By a Gentleman formerly of Grey's-Inn. [Mr. Holt.] 8vo. 1749.

A free and familiar Letter to that great refiner of Pope and Shakspeare, the Rev. Mr. William Warburton, preacher of Lincoln's-Inn. With Remarks upon the Epistle of Friend A. E. In which his unhandsome treatment of this celebrated writer is exposed in the manner it deserves. By a Country Curate [Dr. Grey]. 8vo. 1750.

Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark: with a Preface containing some general Remarks on the Writings of Shakspeare. 8vo. 1752.

The Beauties of Shakspeare: regularly selected from each Play: with a general Index digesting them under proper Heads. Illustrated with explanatory Notes, and similar Passages from ancient and modern Authors. By William Dodd, B. A. late of Clare-Hall, Cambridge. 2 Vols. 12mo. First Edition, 1752. Second Edition, 1757. Third Edition, 3 Vols. 12mo. 1782.

Shakspeare Illustrated: or the Novels and Histories on which the Plays of Shakspeare are founded, collected and translated from the original Authors, with critical Remarks. In two Volumes. [By Mrs. Lenox.] 12mo. 1753.

A third Volume with the same Title, 1754.

The Novel from which the Play of the Merchant of Venice, written by Shakspeare, is taken, translated from the Italian. To which is added, a Translation of a Novel from the Decamerone of Bocaccio. 8vo. 1755.

Critical, Historical, and Explanatory Notes on Shakspeare, with Emendations of the Text and Metre: by Zachary Grey, LL. D. 2 Vols. 1755.

The Canons of Criticism and Glossary, being a Supplement to Mr. Warburton's Edition of Shakspeare. Collected from the Notes in that celebrated Work, and proper to be bound up with it. By the other Gentleman

Gentleman of Lincoln's-Inn. [Mr. Edwards.] First Edition, 8vo. 1748. Seventh Edition with Additions, 8vo. 1765.——Remarks on Shakspeare, by Mr. Roderick, are printed at the end of this Edition.

A Revisal of Shakspeare's Text, wherein the Alterations introduced into it by the more Modern Editors and Criticks, are particularly considered. By Mr. Heath. 8vo. 1765.

A Review of Dr. Johnson's New Edition of Shakspeare; in which the Ignorance or Inattention of that Editor is exposed, and the Poet defended from the Persecution of his Commentators. By W. Kenrick. 8vo. 1765.

An Examination of Mr. Kenrick's Review of Mr. Johnson's Edition of Shakspeare. 8vo. 1766.

A Defence of Mr. Kenrick's Review of Dr. Johnson's Shakspeare, containing a number of curious and ludicrous Anecdotes of Literary Biography. By a Friend. 8vo. 1766.

Observations and Conjectures on some Passages of Shakspeare. By Thomas Tyrwhitt, Esq. 8vo. 1766.

An Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare, addressed to Joseph Cradock, Esq. By the Rev. Dr. Richard Farmer. 8vo. 1767. Second Edition, 12mo. 1767.

A Letter to David Garrick, Esq. concerning a Glossary to the Plays of Shakspeare, on a more extensive Plan than has hitherto appeared. To which is added a Specimen. By Richard Warner, Esq. 8vo. 1768.

An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakspeare, compared with the Greek and French Dramatick Poets, with some Remarks upon the Misrepresentations of Mons. de Voltaire. By Mrs. Montagu, 8vo. 1770. Second Edition, 1776.

The Tragedy of King Lear, as lately published, vindicated from the Abuse of the Critical Reviewers; and the wonderful Genius and Abilities of those Gentlemen for Criticism, set forth, celebrated, and extolled. By the Editor of King Lear. [Charles Jennens, Esq.] 8vo. 1772.

Shakspeare, 4to. This piece was written by Dr. Kenrick Prescott, and is dated Feb. 5, 1774.

Introduction to the School of Shakspeare, held on Wednesday Evenings in the Apollo, at the Devil-Tavern, Temple-Bar. To which is added, A Retort Courteous on the Criticks, as delivered at the Second and Third Lectures. 8vo. No Date, but printed in 1774.

Cursory Remarks on Tragedy, on Shakspeare, and on certain French and Italian Poets, &c. (said to have been written by Mr. Thomas.) Crown 8vo. 1774.

A Philosophical Analysis and Illustration of some of Shakspeare's remarkable Characters. By William Richardson, Esq. Professor of Humanity in the University of Glasgow. First Edition. 12mo. 1773. Second, 1774.

The Morality of Shakspeare's Drama illustrated. By Mrs. Griffith. 8vo. 1775.

Notes and Various Readings on Shakspeare, Part the First, &c. with a General Glossary. By Edward Capell, 4to. 1775.

A Letter to George Hardinge, Esq. on the subject of a Passage in Mr. Steevens's Preface to his Impression of Shakspeare. (By the Rev. Mr. Collins.) 4to. 1777. (Dr. Johnson observed of this performance, that it was "a great gun without powder or ball"). On the title-page of a copy of it, presented by Mr. Capell, together with his *Shaksperiana*, to Trinity-College, Cambridge, is the following MS. Note. "Seen through the press by Mr. H—, &c. Note in p. 18, added, and the Postscript new-moulded by him. E. C." i. e. Edward Capell.

Discours sur Shakspeare et sur Monsieur de Voltaire, par Joseph Baretti, Secrétaire pour la Correspondence étrangère de l'Académie Royale Britannique, 8vo. 1777.

An Essay on the Dramatick Character of Sir John Falstaff. 8vo. 1777.

A Letter from Monsieur de Voltaire to the French Academy. Translated from the original Edition just published at Paris. 8vo. 1777.

Notes and Various Readings to Shakspeare, by Edward Capell. 3 vols. 4to.

Remarks, Critical and Illustrative, on the Text and Notes of the last Edition of Shakspeare. 8vo. 1783.

A Familiar Address to the Curious in English Poetry, more particularly to the Readers of Shakspeare. By Thirsites Literarius. 8vo. 1784.

A Second Appendix to Mr. Malone's Supplement to the last Edition of the Plays of Shakspeare; containing additional Observations, by the Editor of the Supplement. 8vo. 1783.

The Beauties of Shakspeare, selected from his Works. To which are added, the principal Scenes in the same Author. 12mo. 1784. Printed for Kearsley.

Essays on Shakspeare's Dramatick Characters of Richard the Third, King Lear, and Timon of Athens. To which are added, an Essay on the Faults of Shakspeare, and additional Observations on the Character of Hamlet. By Mr. Richardson. 12mo. 1784.

Dramatick Miscellanies: consisting of Critical Observations on the Plays of Shakspeare, &c. By Thomas Davies, 3 vols. 8vo. 1784.

Comments on the last Edition of Shakspeare's Plays. By John Monck Mason, 8vo. 1785.

EXTRACTS

EXTRACTS of ENTRIES
ON THE
BOOKS of the STATIONERS-COMPANY.

A CHARTER was granted to the Company of Stationers, on the 4th of May 1556 (third and fourth of Philip and Mary), and was confirmed by Queen Elizabeth in 1560.

The first volume of these Entries has been either lost or destroyed, as the earliest now to be found is lettered B. The hall was burnt in the Fire of London. The entries begin *July 17, 1576.*

Feb. 18, 1582.

Vol. B.

M. Tottell.] Romeo and Julietta.*

p. 193.

N. B. The terms *book* and *ballad* were anciently used to signify dramatick works, as well as any other forms of composition; while *tragedy* and *comedy* were titles very often bestowed on novels of the serious and the lighter kind.

* Perhaps the original work on which Shakspeare founded his play of *Romeo and Juliet*.

April

April 3, 1592.

*Edw. White.] The Tragedie of Arden of Feversham and Black Will *.* 286

April 18, 1593.

Rich. Field.] A booke entitled Venus and Adonis †. 297 b.

Afterwards entered by ——— Harrison, sen. *June 23, 1594*: by W. Leake, *June 23, 1596*: by W. Barret, *Feb. 16, 1616*: by John Barker, *March 8, 1619*: and by J. Harrison and J. Wright, *May 7, 1626*.

Oct.

* This play was reprinted in 1770, at Feversham, with a preface attributing it to Shakspeare. The collection of parallel passages which the editor has brought forward to justify his supposition, is such as will make the reader smile. The following is a specimen.

Arden of Feversham, p. 74.

“ Fling down Endymion, and snatch him up.”

Merchant of Venice, Act V. Sc. i.

“ Peace! how the moon sleeps with Endymion!”

Arden of Feversham, p. 87.

“ Let my death make amends for all my sin.”

Much Ado about Nothing. Act IV. Sc. ii.

“ Death is the fairest cover for her shame.”

† The last stanza of a poem entitled, “ *Mirrha, the Mother of Adonis; or Lustes Prodegies*, by William “Barksted,” 1607, has the following praise of Shakspeare’s *Venus and Adonis*.

“ But

Oct. 19, 1593.

Symon Waterson.] A booke entitled the Tragedie
of Cleopatra *. 301 b.

Feb. 6, 1593.

John Danter.] A booke entitled a noble Roman
History of Titus Andronicus. 304 b.

Entered also unto him by warrant from
Mr. Woodcock, the ballad thereof.

March 12, 1593.

Tho. Millington.] A booke entituled the First
Part of the Contention of the twoo famous
Houses of Yorke and Lancaster, with the
Deathe of the good Duke Humphrie, and
the Banishment and Deathe of the Duke of
Yorke, and the tragical Ende of the proude
Cardinall of Winchester, with the notable
Rebellion of Jacke Cade, and the Duke of
Yorke's first Claime unto the Crown. 305 b.

“ But stay, my Muse, in thy own confines keepe;

“ And wage not warr with so deere lov'd a neighbor;

“ But having sung thy day-song, rest and sleepe,

“ Preserve thy small fame and his greater favor.

“ His song was worthie merit (Shakspeare hee)

“ Sung the fair blossome, thou the withered tree:

“ Laurel is due to him; his art and wit

“ Hath purchas'd it; cypres thy brow will fit.”

* I suppose this to be Daniel's tragedy of Cleopatra.
Simon Waterson was one of the printers of his other
works.

May

May 2, 1594.

Peter Shorte.] A pleasaunt conceyted hystorie
called the Tayminge of a Shrowe *. 306 b.

May 9, 1594.

Mr. Harrison, sen.] A booke intituled the Ravishment of Lucrece. B. 306 b.

January 16, 1625.

Francis Williams.] Lucrece by Shakspere. D. 112 b.

May 12, 1594.

Tho. Strode.] A booke intituled the famous Victories of Henry the Fift, containing the honorable Battel of Agincourt †. 306 b.

May 14, 1594.

Edw. White.] A booke intituled the famous Chronicle Historye of Leire, King of England, and his three Daughters ‡. 307

May 22, 1594.

Edw. White.] A booke intituled a Winter Nyght's Pastime §. 307 b.

* I conceive it to be the play that furnished Shakspere with the materials which he afterwards worked up into another with the same title.

† This might have been the *very displeasing play* mentioned in the epilogue to the second part of King Henry IV.

‡ I suppose this to be the play on the same subject as that of our author, but written before it.

§ Query, if the *Winter's Tale*.

June

June 19, 1594.

Tho. Creede.] An enterlude entituled the Tragedie of Richard the Third, wherein is shown the Death of Edward the Fourthe, with the Smotheringe of the twoo Princes in the Tower, with the lamentable End of Shore's Wife, and the Contention of the two Houses of Lancaster and York*. 309 b.

July 20, 1594.

Tho. Creede.] The lamentable Tragedy of Locrine, the eldest Son of K. Brutus, discoursing the Warres of the Britains, &c. 310 b.

Vol. C.

Before the beginning of this volume are placed two leaves, containing irregular entries, prohibitions, notes, &c. Among these are the following:

Aug. 4.

As You Like It, a book,

Henry the Fift, a book †.

Comedy of Much Ado about Nothing.

} to be staied.

The dates scattered over these pages are from 1596 to 1615.

* This could not have been the work of Shakspeare, as the death of Jane Shore makes no part of his drama.

† Probably the play before that of Shakspeare.

Dec.

Dec. 1, 1595.

Cuthbert Burby.] A booke entituled Edward the Third and the Black Prince, their Warres with King John of France *.

6

Aug. 5, 1596.

Edw. White.] A new ballad of Romeo and Juliett †.

12 b.

Aug. 15, 1597.

Rich. Jones.] Two ballads, being the first and second parts of the Widowe of Watling-Street ‡.

22 b.

Aug. 29, 1597.

Andrew Wise.] The Tragedye of Richard the Seconde.

Oct. 20, 1597.

Andrew Wise.] The Tragedie of King Richard the Third, with the Deathe of the Duke of Clarence.

25

* This is ascribed to Shakspeare by the compilers of ancient catalogues.

† Quere, if Shakspeare's play, the first edition of which appeared in 1597.

‡ Perhaps the songs on which the play with the same title was founded. It may, however, be the play itself. It was not uncommon to divide one dramattick piece, though designed for a single exhibition, into two parts. See the *K. John* before that of Shakspeare.

Feb.

Feb. 25, 1597.

Andrew Wise.] A booke entitled the Historie of Henry the Fourth, with his Battle at Shrewsbury against Henry Hottspurre of the North, with the conceited Mirth of Sir John Falstoff.

31

July 22, 1598.

James Roberts.] A booke of the Merchaunt of Venyse, otherwise called the Jewe of Venyse. Provided that it be not prynted by the said James Roberts, or any other whatsoever, without leave first had from the ryght honourable the Lord Chamberlen.

39 b.

Aug. 4. 1600.

Tho. Pavyer.] First Part of the History of the Life of Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham.

Item, The Second Part of the History of Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, with his Martyrdom.

63

Aug. 14, 1600.

Tho. Pavyer.] The Historye of Henry the Fifth, with the Battel of Agincourt, &c.

63

Aug. 23, 1600.

And. Wise and Wm. Aspley.] Much Ado about Nothing.

63 b.

Second Part of the History of King Henry the Fourth, with the Humors of Sir John Falstaff, written by Mr. SHAKSPERE.

ibid.

A a

Oct.

Oct. 8, 1600.

Tho. Fisher.] A book called a Midsomer Nyghte
Dreame. 65 b.

Oct. 28, 1600.

Tho. Heyes.] A booke called the Booke of the
Merchaunt of Venyce. 66

Jan. 18, 1601.

John Busby.] An excellent and pleasaunt conceit-
ed Comedie of Sir John Faulstoff and the
Merry Wyves of Windsore. 78

Arth. Johnston.] The preceding entered, as as-
signed to him from John Busby. *ibid.*

April 19, 1602.

Tho. Pavyer.] A booke called Titus Andronicus. 80 b.

July 26, 1602.

James Roberts.] A booke called the Revenge of
Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, as it was
lately acted by the Lord Chamberlain his
servants. 84 b.

Aug. 11, 1602.

Wm. Cotton.] A booke called the Lyfe and Death
of the Lord Cromwell, as yt was lately
acted by the Lord Chamberleyn his ser-
vantes. 85 b.

Feb. 7. 1602.

Mr. Roberts.] The booke of Troilus and Cres-
sida, as it is acted by my Lord Chamberlen's
men. 91 b.

June

June 25, 1603.

Matt. Law.] King Richard III.

King Richard II.

King Henry IV. First Part.

98

Feb. 12, 1604.

Nath. Butter.] That he get good allowance for the Enterlude of Henry VIII. before he begin to print it; and then procure the warden's hand to it for the entrance of yt, he is to have the same for his copy*.

May 8, 1605.

Simon Stafford.] A booke called the tragicall Historie of King Leir and his three Daughters, as it was lately acted.

* Though it be uncertain whether this Interlude was Shakspeare's King Henry VIII. or not, yet we have never heard of any other play, professedly written on the same subject; and have reason to think that our author's performance was produced during the reign of queen Elizabeth, on account of the compliment paid to her at the conclusion of it.

Nathaniel Butter was the publisher of Shakspeare's King Lear. The particular cautions shown concerning the licence to print the present dramattick piece, might lead us to suspect it to have been Shakspeare's, and that the sagacious Company of Stationers were of opinion that this compliment to the memory of the queen, might not prove very pleasing to her inglorious successor.

John Wright.] By assignment from Simon Stafford, and consent of Mr. Leake, the tragical History of King Lear, &c. provided that Simon Stafford shall have the printing of this book *.

ibid.

July 3, 1605.

Tho. Pavyer.] A ballad of a lamentable Murder done in Yorkshire, by a Gentleman upon two of his owne Children, sore wounding his Wife and Nurse, &c †.

126

Jan. 22, 1606.

Nich. Ling.] Romeo and Juliett.

Love's Labour Lost.

Taming of a Shrewe.

147

Aug. 6, 1607.

Geo. Elde.] A booke called the Comedie of the Puritan Wydowe.

157 b.

Aug. 6, 1607.

Tho. Thorpe.] A comedy called What You Will ‡. *ibid.*

Oct. 22, 1607.

Arth. Johnson.] The Merry Devil of Edmonton §. 159 b.

* This is the *King Lear* before that of Shakspeare.

† Query, if the play.

‡ Perhaps this is Marston's comedy of *What You Will*. I have a copy of it dated 1607. *What You Will*, however, is the second title to Shakspeare's *Twelfth Night*.

§ The *Merry Devil of Edmonton* is mentioned in the *Blacke Booke* by T. M. 1604. "Give me leave to see the *Merry Divil of Edmunton*, or *A Woman kill'd with Kindnesse*."

Nov.

Nov. 19, 1607.

John Smythwick.] A booke called Hamlett.

The Taminge of a Shrewe.

Romeo and Julett.

Love's Labour Lost.

161

Nov. 26, 1607.

Nath. Butter and *John Busby.*] Mr. William Shakspeare, his Hystorie of King Lear, as it was played before the King's Majestie at Whitehall, upon St. Stephen's night at Christmas last, by his Majesties' servants playing usually at the Globe on the Bank-side.

161 b.

April 5, 1608.

Joseph Hunt and *Tho. Archer.*] A book called the Life and Death of the Merry Devil of Edmonton, with the pleasant Pranks of Smugg the Smith, Sir John, and mine Hoste of the George, about their stealing of Venison. By T. B*.

165 b.

May 2, 1608.

Mr. Pavyer.] A booke called a Yorkshire Tragedy, written by William Shakspeare.

167

* Bound up in a volume of plays attributed to Shakspeare, and once belonging to King Charles I. but now in Mr. Garrick's collection. The initial letters at the end of this entry, sufficiently free Shakspeare from the charge of having been its author.

May 2, 1608.

Edw. Blount.] The book of Pericles, Prince of Tyre. 167 b.

A book called Anthony and Cleopatra. *ibid.*

Jan. 28, 1608.

Rich. Bonian and Hen. Whalley.] A booke called the History of Troylus and Cressida. 178 b.

May 20, 1609.

Thomas Thorpe.] A booke called Shakspeare's Sonnets. 183 b.

Oct. 16, 1609.

Mr. Welby.] Edward the Third. 189

Dec. 16, 1611.

John Browne.] A booke called the Lyfe and Death of the Lord Cromwell, by W. S. 214 b.

Nov. 29, 1614.

John Beale.] A booke called the Hystorie of Lord Faulconbridge, bastard Son to Richard Cordelion *. 256 b.

Feb. 16, 1616.

Mr. Barrett.] Life and Death of Lord Cromwell. 279

March 20, 1617.

Mr. Snodham.] Edward the Third, the play. 288.

* Query, if this was Shakspeare's *King John*, or some old romance like that of *Richard Cœur de Lion*?

Sept.

Sept. 17, 1618.

John Wright.] The comedy called Mucedorus *. 293 b.

July 8, 1619.

Nich. Okes.] A play called the Merchaunt of Venice.

303

Vol. D.

Oct. 6, 1621.

Tho. Walkely.] The Tragedie of Othello, the Moore of Venice.

21

Nov. 8, 1623.

Mr. Blount and Isaak Jaggard.] Mr. William Shakspeare's Comedyes and Tragedyes, soe many of the said Copies as are not formerly entered to other men. Viz.

COMEDIES.

The Tempest.

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

Measure for Measure.

The Comedy of Errors.

As You Like It.

All's Well that Ends Well.

Twelwe Night.

The Winter's Tale.

HISTORIES.

The Third Part of Henry the Sixt.

Henry the Eight.

* Bound up in a volume of plays attributed to Shakspeare, and once belonging to King Charles I. See Mr. Garrick's collection.

TRAGEDIES.

TRAGEDIES.

Coriolanus.

Timon of Athens.

Julius Cæsar.

Mackbeth.

Anthonie and Cleopatra.

Cymbeline.

69

June 29, 1624.

Mr. Alde.] Leire and his Daughters.

D 82

Ed. Brewster and Rob. Birde.] The plays of King
Henry the First.

D 126

Dec. 14, 1624.

Mr. Pavyer.] Titus Andronicus.

Widow of Watling-Street.

93

Feb. 23, 1625.

Mr. Stansby.] Edward the Third, the play.

115

April 3, 1626.

Mr. Parker.] Life and Death of Lord Cromwell.

120

Aug. 4, 1626.

Edw. Brewster and Rob. Birde.] Mr. Pavyer's
right in Shakspeare's plays, or any of them.

Sir John Oldcastle, a play.

Tytus Andronicus.

Hystorie of Hamblett.

127

March 1, 1627.

Rich. Hawkins.] Othello the More of Venice.

160

Jan.

Jan. 29, 1629.

Mr. Meighen.] Merry Wives of Windsor. 193

Nov. 8, 1630.

Ric. Cotes.] Henrye the Fift.

Sir John Oldcastle.

Tytus Andronicus.

Yorke and Lancaster.

Agincourt.

Pericles.

Hamblett.

Yorkshire Tragedy.

208

The sixteen plays in p. 69, were assigned by
 Tho. Blount to Edward Allot, June 26,
 1632.

109

Edward Allot was one of the publishers of the
 second Folio, 1632.

MR.

MR. STEEVENS's
REMARKS ON ENTRIES
OF THE
STATIONERS-COMPANY.

IT is worth remark, that on the books of the Stationers-Company, *Titus Andronicus*, *Venus and Adonis*, two parts of *King Henry VI.* *Lochrine*, *Widow of Watling-Street*, *King Richard II.* *King Richard III.* *King Henry IV.* &c. are the first performances attributed to Shakspeare. Thus might the progress of his dramattick art be ascertained, were we absolutely sure that his productions were set down in chronological arrangement on these records of ancient publication. It may be added, that although the private interests of play-houses had power to suspend the printing of his theatrical pieces, they could not have retarded the appearance of his poems; and we may, therefore, justly date the commencement of his authorship from the time when the first of them came out, viz. his *Venus and Adonis*, when he was in the twenty-ninth year of his age. In the dedication of this poem to the earl

earl of Southampton, Shakspeare calls it "The first heir of his invention."

Of all his undisputed plays, the only one omitted on the books of the Stationers-Company, is *King John*. The same attention to secure a lasting property in the works of Ben Jonson and Beaumont and Fletcher, does not appear to have been exerted; as of the former I have met with no more than seven or eight entries, and of the latter a still less considerable number. Beaumont died in 1615, Fletcher in 1625, and Jonson in 1637. My researches, however, were not continued below the year 1632, the date of the second folio edition of Shakspeare.

Let it, likewise, be added to the praises of our author, that, if he did not begin to write till 1593, nor ceased till within three years of his death, which happened in 1616, in the course of twenty years he had produced no less than thirty-five plays, admitting that eight others (among which is to be reckoned *Titus Andronicus**) were spurious. I seize this opportunity, however, to express my doubts concerning all but the last mentioned piece, and *Lochrine*. *Lochrine* has only the letters W. S. prefixed to it, and exhibits internal proofs that it was not only the composition of a scholar, but of a pedant. See a note to the *List of Plays ascribed to Shakspeare by the Editors of the two later folios, or the Compilers of Ancient Catalogues*, where the same assertion is more fully supported. See also

* See the notes on this play.

another note at the beginning of *Troilus and Cressida*. Neither has it ever yet been sufficiently proved, that it was once customary to set the names of celebrated living authors at full length in the title-pages to the works of others, or to enter them, under these false colours, in the books at Stationers-Hall. Such frauds, indeed, have been attempted at a later period, but with little success. The most inconsiderable of all the pieces rejected by the editors of Shakspeare, is the *Yorkshire Tragedy*; and yet, in 1608, it was both registered and published with his name. At this time too, he was probably in London, presiding at the Globe theatre, in consequence of the licence granted by K. James I. to him and his fellow-comedians in 1603. The *Yorkshire Tragedy* is only one out of four short dramas which were exhibited for the entertainment of a single evening, as the title-page informs us; and, perhaps, would have been forgotten with the other three, but that it was known to have been the work of our celebrated author. Such miscellaneous representations were not uncommon, and the reader will find a specimen of them in the tenth volume of Mr. Seward's edition of Beaumont and Fletcher. Shakspeare, who has expressed such a solicitude, that his *clowns should speak no more than was set down for them*, would naturally have taken some opportunity to shew his impatience at being rendered answerable, in a still more decisive manner, for entire compositions which were not his own. It is possible, likewise, that the copies of the plays omitted in the first folio,

2

had

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